

The World to Come.

THE
Glories of Heaven
AND THE
Terrors of Hell,
Lively Display'd,
Under the Similitude
OF A
VISION.

By G. L. *Wainwright*.

*How amiable are thy Tabernacles, O Lord
of Hosts! Psal. LXXXIV. 1.*

*Knowing therefore the Terrors of the Lord,
we perswade Men, 2 Cor. v. 2.*

*London, Printed for John Gwillim, against
Crossby-Square in Bishopsgate-street, 1711.*

*George Carter was a printer living in
Bishopsgate Street 1711*

0944.C.4.



Glor
have
to c
then
will
such
been
And
may
be
fue
not in
scrip
near
De
ll n
our
Colv

TO THE
READER.

Christian Reader,

THE Design of the following Treatise, is thy Spiritual Advantage; that by displaying the Heavenly Glory to the Eyes of thy Mind, thou may'st have thy Affections and Desires stirred up to choose it as thy chiefest Treasure; and then, where thy Treasure is, thy Heart will soon be also. And perhaps here is as much said to engage thy Affections, as has been any where written upon this Subject: And which, through the Divine Blessing, may beget in thee those Breathings after the Happiness here described, which may issue in thy Eternal Fruition of it. It does not indeed pretend to give a Graphical Description thereof (for it does not yet appear what we shall be) but it gives such Description of it as the Divine Oracles will warrant; shewing wherein the Nature of our Happiness does chiefly consist; and solving the most Abstruse and Curious

A 2 Questions

TO THE READER.

Questions about it, according to the Word of Truth.

And seeing Love and Desire are the Wings of the Soul, by which it flies toward: Heaven, I doubt not but the devout Soul will here find those Attractives that will insensibly draw it thither: For what can more engage our Affections, than the Desire of beholding that bright Eternal Excellency, who is altogether Desires; and whom the Church describes as fairer than the Children of Men? And if he was so in the Days of his Humiliation, how much more Glorious is he on the Throne, being Crowned with Glory and Honour, as the Apostle to the Hebrews speaks?

But altho' Glorious Things be spoken of the City of God, which is represented to us as an Eternal Excellency, and the Joy of many Generations; yet after the largest Descriptions, we shall be forc'd to acknowledge, when we come to Heaven, what the Queen of Sheba did, when she saw the Glory of Solomon, That the half has not been told us.

However, There is enough to engage our Hearts, and ravish our Affections, and to make us cry out with David, How amiable are thy Tabernacles, O Lord of Hosts!

But

TO the READER.

But as Love and Desire carries us after that which we apprehend to be Amiable and Lovely; so Fear is a Passion of the Soul, whereby it flies from, and avoids, whatever it apprehends to be Evil. And this Passion works as strongly in some Souls, as Love and Desire does in others. And to these the Visions of Hell may be as Useful, to asfright 'em from it, as the Visions of Heaven, to draw the others to it. Here you may, as it were, lay your Ears to the Mouth of Tophet, and hear the doleful Lamentations of those lost Wretches, that through a vain Pursuit of Sinful Pleasures, have brought upon themselves Eternal Miseries. Here you may see how they too soon lament those Torments 'tis too late to help. And these should, to all wise considering Persons, be look'd on as so many Sea-Marks, to warn others to avoid the like Destruction.

The Author to the Hebrews tells us, That Noah being moved with Fear, prepared an Ark to the saving of his House: And if the Fear of the Torments of Hell (which are here so lively described) move any Souls to get into the Ark, Christ Jesus, and so avoid the Wrath to come, it will be an unspeakable Mercy.

Nor let any one be stumbled that this is

TO the READER.

delivered under the Similitude of a Vision :
For so long as the Truths herein convey'd are
according to the Analogy of Faith, the Dress
in which they are put may be very well dis-
pens'd with. I have done herein like the Phy-
sicians, who put their Physick in some pleasant
Vehicle, to make it go down the easier with
their Patients. And since the way to Heaven
has been so taking under the Similitude of a
Dream, why should not the Journeys End be
as acceptable under the Similitude of a Vi-
sion ? Nay, why should it not be more ac-
ceptable, since the End is preferable to the
Means, and Heaven to the Way that brings
us thither ? The Pilgrim met with many
Difficulties ; but here they are all over : All
Storms and Tempests here, are hush'd in
Silence and Serenity.

Let's stay no longer here then, but mount
thither upon the Golden Wings of Faith and
Love : For lo, the Winter is past, the
Rain is over and gone ; the Flowers ap-
pear on the Earth, the time of the singing
of Birds is come, and the Voice of the
Turtle is heard in our Land ; Yea, the
blessed Bridegroom of our Souls calls to us.
Arise, my Love, my fair One, and come
away. Which, Reader, that thou may'st make
haste to do, is the Desire and Prayer of

Thy Souls Well-wisher, G. I.

*The author of this book
was most likely the Printer
of it.*

The World to Come:

OR,

VISIONS

OF

HEAVEN and HELL.

The Introduction.

WHEN Wicked and Profligate
Persons have gone on in a
Course of Sin, to that de-
gree, that they can scarce hope for
Pardon; and find they have reason to
fear the just Judgment of God for their
Sins; they begin at first to wish that
there was no God to punish them, which
they think their Interest; and so by de-
grees come to persuade themselves that
there is none: And when they set them-
selves to study for Arguments to back
their

2 *The World to Come: Or,*
their Opinion, and *Prove* what they
are willing to *Believe*. It was with one
of this sort of *Brutes* (for they are scarce
worthy of the Name of *Men*) that I had
the unhappiness to be acquainted; who
would be continually inculcating me,
That there was neither God nor Devil, Hea-
ven nor Hell; and that those things were
only the Politick Inventions of such as
were willing to keep the World in awe:
Just (says he) *as we talk of Bug-bears to*
afrighten Children. It was not without
Horror and Trembling that I first heard
this Discourse; and therefore I usually
left him, when he began upon these To-
picks; but his speaking of them to me
so often, at last prevail'd with me to
consider what grounds he had for what
he said; and from this time I found my
Mind perplex'd with so much Trouble
and Darkness, that I could hardly bear
up under it: For I knew not how to
make out, to my own Satisfaction, those
Truths, which before appear'd to me
Self-evident. I could not think there
was no God, but with the greatest Hor-
ror, yet I call'd in question the Truth
of his Being. I wou'd not have parted
with my Hopes of Heaven, to have been
made

made Heir of all the World; and yet I question'd whether there was any such Place or State: And I began to doubt whether there was any Hell, and yet at the same time thought I found the flames of it flashing in my Face. Thus was my Mind distracted with apparent Contradictions; and I found I was involv'd in a Labyrinth of Confusion, out of which I had no Clue to Extricate my self: In this perplex'd Condition, I went to my false Friend, to see what Comfort he cou'd administer to me; (which was like *Saul's* going to the Witch of *Endor*, when God had forsaken him) But what he said, did more *Confound* than *Satisfie* me. He indeed laugh'd at my Fears, pretended to pity my Weakness, and seem'd to hug himself in the Freedom and Liberty which he enjoy'd. He told me he was never molested in the Prosecution of what he had to do, by the frightful Mormo's of a Future State, or of an After-Reckoning; That Nature was the great Mistress of the Universe, and that therefore he follow'd her Dictates; and that all the Care he took, was, so to live here, that when his Dust shou'd be next impregnated, it might be into some de-

lightful Species of Beings: Which would likewise in a great measure be owing to the place of his Burial; for if he were Buried in a Church, or laid up in a Vault, 'twas possible his Dust might be turn'd into Spiders, Toads, or Serpents; and therefore he design'd to be buried in a Field, or Garden, if he could; that there his Ashes might spring up in curious and delightful Flowers; which was the utmost Happiness he could propose to himself; and should be very well satisfied to find all those Spirits and Powers he was now possess'd of, exerted in the Variegated Beauties of Nature. And further, he affirmed, That for ought he knew, in the various Metempsychosis of Nature, he might some Ages hence, again impregnate a Human Body; as he believ'd he had done many Ages past.

I then urg'd the Scriptures against all this *unintelligible System*; but he Exploded that, as being only the Engine, by which Politick Men brought about their Designs: And that to prove a Deity by the Scriptures, was the same thing as to prove the Divine Original of the Scriptures, by the Being of a Deity: Which was *Idem per Idem*.

These

These Discourses of his, putting me still on further Doubts, I became so uneasy, that my Life was a Burthen to me; I dreaded to be left to the Belief of those cursed Notions, and yet they continually run in my Mind: I wish'd a thousand times I had never heard them, and yet they were ever before me. What! (said I to my self) is all my hopes of Heaven nothing but a vain Chimera? Have I serv'd God for nought? Or rather have I fancy'd one, when there is no such Being? It is impossible to tell the Agonies I felt, upon my giving way to such Thoughts as these, which still with greater force assaulted me; until at last I was 'hurry'd to the utmost Pitch of Despairation: Why should I linger thus (thought I) between Despair and Hope? Is it not better, said I to my self, to put a period to this wretched Life, and to try the Truth of Things?

Upon this, I took a Resolution to destroy my self; and in order thereunto, went out one Morning to an adjacent Wood, where I intended to act this Bloody Tragedy; which, as I was about to perpetrate, methought I heard a secret Whisper, saying, O Epenetus, Plung

not thy self in everlasting Misery, to gratifie thy Soul's worst Enemy: That fatal Stroke thou art about to give, seals up thy own Damnation: For if there be a GOD, as sure there is, how can you hope for Mercy from him, when you thus wilfully destroy his Image? From whence this secret Whisper came, I knew not; but do believe it was from God: For I am sure it came with so much Power, it made me fling away the Instrument with which I had designed to offer Violence to my own Life; and shew'd me, in a moment, the Wickedness thereof. The Horror of this Barbarous Intention set all my Joints a Trembling, that I could hardly stand: And then the fatal Precipiece of my design'd Destruction was represented to me in that frightful View, that I could not but acknowledge my Deliverance to be the Work of some Invisible and Spiritual Power, that came so seasonably to my Rescue. And Gratitude oblig'd me to return him Thanks: So I kneel'd down upon the Ground, and said,

O thou Invisible Eternal Power, which, tho' unseen by Man, beholdest all his Actions, and who hast now with-held me from the Defacing of thine Image, I give thee humble
Thanks;

Thanks: Yes, O thou Sovereign Being of all Beings, I give thee Thanks that I am still alive, and able to acknowledge there is such a Being: O do not hide thy self from my beholding, in such thick Clouds of Darkness; but let the Sun of Glory shine upon me, and chase away the Blackness of my benighted Soul; that I may never more question thy Being or Omnipotence, which I have had this moment so great Experience of.

Then rising from my Knees, I went and sat me down upon a Bank, my Mind being greatly taken up with the doring Thoughts of that Eternal Goodness that had so eminently Saved me from the dreadful Gulph of Everlasting Ruine, when I was just a going to plunge my self into it. And now methought I could not but admire that I should be so sottish to call in question the Being of a Deity; which every Creature was a witness of; and which a Man's own Conscience, more than a thousand Witnesses, could not but dictate to him.

Now whilst my Thoughts were taken up with these Meditations, as I sat upon the Bank, I was suddenly surrounded with a Glorious Light, the exceeding Brightness whereof was such, as I had never

never seen any thing like it before; this both surprized and amazed me, and whilst I was wondering from whence it came, I saw coming towards me a Glorious Appearance, representing the Person of a Man, but circled round about with lucid Beams of inexpressible Light and Glory, which stream'd from him all the way he came: His Countenance was very Awful, and yet mixt with such an Air of Sweetness, as render'd it extreamly Pleasing, and gave me some secret hopes he came not to me as an Enemy; and yet I knew not how to bear his bright Appearance; and endeavouring to stand upon my Feet, I soon found I had no more Strength in me, and so fell flat down upon my Face. But by the kind Assistance of his Arm, I was soon set upon my Feet again, and new Strength was put into me; which I soon perceiving, addrest my self to the bright Form before me, saying, *O my shining Deliverer, who hast invigorated my feeble Body, and restored me to new Life; how shall I acknowledge my Thankfulness, and in what manner shall I adore thee?*

To which he replied, both with an Air of Majesty and Mildness, *Pay thy Adorations*

Adorations to the Author of thy Being, and not to me, who am thy Fellow-Creature; and am sent by him, whose very Being thou hast so lately denied, to stop thee from falling into that Eternal Ruine, whereinto thou wert going to precipitate thy self.

This touch'd my Heart with such a sense of my own Unworthiness, that my Soul even melted within me, and I could not forbear crying out, O how utterly unworthy am I of all this Grace and Mercy?

To which the Heavenly Messenger reply'd, The Divine Majesty does not consult, in shewing Mercy, thy Unworthiness, but his own unbounded Goodness, and incomprehensible Love: He saw with how much malice the grand Enemy of Souls desired thy Ruine, and lest him go on with hopes of overcoming thee, but still upheld thee by his secret Power; through which, when Satan thought himself most sure, the snare is broken, and thou art escaped. These Words made me break forth in this Extatick Rapture:

*O who the depths of this great Love can tell,
To save a tempted sinking Soul from Hell!
O Glory, Glory to my Saviour's Name,
I'll now through all Eternity proclaim!*

Who,

Who, when I on the brink of Ruine lay,
 Sav'd me from him who would my Soul betray:
 And now I know, tho' I no God would own,
 The LORD is GOD, yea, He is GOD alone!

Ang. Well, said this heavenly Vision,
 with a pleased Countenance, That you
 may never doubt any more of the Reality of
 Eternal Things, the End of my Coming to
 you, is to convince you of the Truth of them;
 not by Faith only, but by Sight also: For I
 will shew you such things as were never yet
 beheld by mortal Eye; and to that end, your
 Eyes shall be strengthened, and made fitting
 to behold immaterial Objects.

At these surprizing Words of the An-
 gel, I was much astonish'd, and doubted
 how I should be able to bear it; and said
 to him,

O my Lord, who is sufficient to bear such
 a Sight?

To which he replied, The Joy of the
 Lord shall be your Strength. And when
 he had said thus, he took hold of me,
 and said, Fear not, for I am sent to shew
 thee things thou hast not seen: And before
 I was aware, I found my self far above
 the Earth; which seemed to me a very
 small and inconsiderable Point, in com-
 parison

parison of that Region of Light, into which I was translated.

Then I said to my bright Conductor, O let it not offend my Lord, if I ask a Question or two of thee.

To which he answered, Speak on: It is my Work to inform thee of such things which thou shalt Enquire of me: For I am a Ministring Spirit, sent forth to Minister to thee, and to those that shall be Heirs of Salvation.

I then said, I would fain be inform'd what that dark Spot, so far below me, is; which grew less and less, as I was mounted higher and higher, and appears much darker, since I came into this Region of Light.

That little Spot, answered my Conductor, that now looks so dark and contemptible, is that World of which you were so lately an Inhabitant: Here you may see how little all that World appears, for a small part of which, so many do unweariedly labour, and lay out all their Strength and Time to purchase it. This is that Spot of Earth that is Canton'd and Sub-divided into so many Kingdoms, to purchase one of which, so many horrid and nefandous Villanies, so

so many bloody and unnatural Murders have been committed: Yea, this is that Spot of Earth, to obtain one small part whereof, so many Men have run the hazard of losing, nay, have actually lost, their Precious and Immortal Souls; so Precious, that the Prince of Peace has told us, *That though one man could gain the whole, it would not Countervail so great a loss.* And the great Reason of their Folly is, because they do not look to things above: For, as you well observ'd, as you ascended nearer to this Region, the World appear'd still less, and more contemptible; and so 'twill do to all, who can by Faith once get their Hearts above it. For could the Sons of Men below, but see the World just as it is, they would not covet it as they now do: But they, alas! are in a state of Darkness; and, which is worse, they love to walk therein. For though the Prince of Light came down amongst them, and plainly shew'd them the true Light of Life, (which, by his Ministers, he still continues) yet they go on in Darkness, and will not bring themselves unto the Light, because their Deeds are Evil.

Epenetus. I asked him further, What were those multitudes of black and horrid Forms, that hover in the Air above the World? which I indeed should have been much afraid of, but that I saw, as you past by, they fled; perhaps as not being able to abide that Brightness with which you are arrayed.

Ang. To this he answered me, They were the fallen and apostate Spirits, which for their Pride and their Rebellion, were cast down from Heaven; and wander in the Air, by the Decree of the Almighty, being bound in Chains of Darkness, and kept unto the Judgment of the great Day. And from thence they are permitted to descend into the World, both for the Tryal of the Elect, and for the Condemnation of the Wicked. And though you now see they have black and horrid Forms, yet were they once the Sons of Light, and were arrayed in Robes of Glorious Brightness, like what you see we wear. The loss of which, though 'twas the effect of their own wilful Sin, fills them with Rage and Malice against the ever-blessed God, whose Power and Majesty they fear and hate: But having lost their Innocence
and

and Glory, they fly those Spirits that have kept their Station, and still continue their Obedience to their Great Creator; in which they are confirmed by the blessed Son of God.

Epen. But tell me, said I, O my happy Conductor, Have they no hopes of being Reconciled to God again, after some Term of Time, or at least some of them?

Ang. No, not at all, said he, they are lost for ever: They were the first that sinned, and had no Tempter: And they were all at once cast down from Heaven. Besides, the Son of God, the Blessed *Messiah*, by whom alone Salvation can be had, took not upon him the Angelick Nature, but left the Apostate Angels all to perish, and only took upon himself the Seed of *Abraham*. And for this Reason they have so much Malice against the Sons of Men, whom 'tis a Torment to 'em to see made Heirs of Heaven, whilst they are doom'd to Hell.

By this time we were got above the Sun, whose vast and glorious Body, above an hundred times far greater than the Earth, moved round the great Expanse, wherein 'twas placed, with such a mighty

a mighty Swiftneſs, that to relate it, 'twould appear incredible: But my Conductor told me, this mighty Immenſe hanging Globe of Fire, was one of the great Works of God, and of ſo ſwift a motion, it moved above a hundred thouſand Miles in that ſmall ſpace of time, we call an Hour. And yet it always keeps its conſtant Courſe, and never has the leaſt Irregularity in its Diurnal, or its Annual Motion: And ſo exceeding Glorious in its Body, that had not my Viſive Faculty been greatly ſtrengthened, I could not have beheld it: Nor were thoſe mighty Globes of Fires, we call the fixed Stars, leſs wonderful; whoſe vaſt and extream height, ten thouſand Leagues, at leaſt, above the Sun, makes them appear like Candles in our ſight, though every one of them exceeds in magnitude the Body of the Earth: And ſhould but one of thoſe vaſt Bodies fall, 'twould burn the World to Cinders in a moment: And yet they hang within their Sphears without any Support, in a pure Sea of *Aether*, ſo thin, and of ſo great Tenuity, that nothing but his Word, that firſt created them, could keep them in their Station.—

Epenet.

Epenet. These Wonders are enough, said I to my Conductor, to convince any one of the great Power of their much more adorable Creator; and of the Blackness of that Infidelity, that can call in question the Being of a Deity, who has given the whole World so many and bright Evidences of his Power and Glory; that were not Men like Beasts, still looking downward, they could not but acknowledge his great Power and Wisdom.

Angel. You speak what is true, replied he; but you shall see far greater things than these: These all are but the Scaffolds and the Outworks to that Glorious Building wherein the Blessed above inhabit, *that House not made with Hands, Eternal in the Heavens*: A View of which (as far as you are capable to comprehend it) shall now be given you.



Visions of Heaven,

A N D

The Glory thereof.

WHAT I had been told by my Conductor, I found good in a few Moments ; for I was presently Translated into the glorious Mansions of the Blessed ; and saw such Things it is impossible to represent, and heard that ravishing melodious Harmony that I can never utter : Well therefore might the Beloved Apostle St. John tell us in his Epistle, *Now are we the Sons of God* ; and it does not yet appear what we shall be ! Whoever has not seen that Glory, can speak but very imperfectly of it ; and they that have, can't tell the Thousandth part of what it is : And therefore the great Apostle of the Gentiles, who tells us he had been caught up into *Paradise*, where he had heard unpeakable Words, which is not possible for a man to utter, gives us no other Account of

of it, but that *Eye has not seen, nor Ear has not heard, nor has it enter'd into the Heart of Man to conceive the Things that GOD has laid up for those that love him.* But I will give you the best Account I can of what I saw and heard; and of the Discourses I had with some of the Blessed, as near as I can remember.

When I was first brought near this glorious Palace, I saw innumerable Hosts of bright Attendants, who welcomed me into that blissful Seat of Happiness, having in all their Countenances an Air of perfect Joy, and of the highest Satisfaction. And there I saw that perfect and unapproachable Light, that assimilates all things into its own Nature; for even the Souls of the glorified Saints are Transparent and Diaphanous. Neither are they enlightned by the Sun, or any created Luminaries; but all that Light, that flows with so much transparent Brightness throughout those Heavenly Mansions, is nothing else but Emanations of the Divine Glory, in comparison of which, the Light of the Sun is but Darkness. And all the Lustre of the most sparkling Diamonds, the Fire of Carbuncles, Sapphires and Rubies, and

and the Orient Brightness of the Richest Pearls, are but like dead Coals in comparison of its Glory : And therefore called, *The Throne of the God of Glory*, wherein the radiant Lustre of the Divine Majesty is reveal'd in the most illustrious manner.

The Ineffable Deity, exalted on the high Throne of his Glory, receiving the Adorations of Myriads of Angels and Saints, singing forth Eternal Hallelujahs and Praises to him, was too bright an Object for Mortality to view. Well may he therefore be called *The God of Glory*, for by his glorious Presence he makes Heaven what it is. There being Rivers of Pleasures perpetually springing from the Divine Presence, and Conciliating Chearfulness, Joy and Splendor, to all the blessed Inhabitants of Heaven, the Place of his happy Residence, and Seat of his Eternal Empire ; wherein the Divine Majesty diffuses the richest Beams of his Goodness and Glory ; and in which his chosen Saints and Servants see and praise his for-ever adorable Excellencies.

For my own part, my visive Faculty was so far too weak to bear the least Translucid Ray shot from that Everlast-

ing Spring of Light and Glory which sat upon the Throne, that I was forced to cry to my Conductor, The Sight of so much Glory is too great for frail Mortality to bear: Yet is it so refreshing and delightful, that I would fain behold it, though I die!

Ang. No, no, said my Conductor, Death enters not within this Blessed Place: Here Life and Immortality reside; nor Sin nor Sorrow here have ought to do: For 'tis the Glory of this happy Place to be for ever freed from all that is Evil; and without that Exemption, our Blessedness even here would be imperfect. — But come along with me, and I will bring thee to one that's in the Body, as thou art; with him converse a while, till I dispatch another Ministration, and then I'll reconduct thee back again.

Epen. Or rather, said I with some Eagerness, let me stay here: For here is no need of building Tabernacles; the Heavenly Mansions are here ready fitted.

To which my Shining Messenger replied, Here in a while thou shalt be fix'd for ever; but the Divine Will first must be obey'd. —

Swift as a Thought, he presently convey'd me through Thousands of those bright and winged Spirits, and then presented me to that illustrious Saint, the great *Elijah*, who Tabernacled in the World below so many hundred Ages past and gone; and yet, methought, I knew him at first sight, as well as if we had been Contemporaries.

Ang. Here's one (*said my Conductor to Elijah*) who by Commission from the Imperial Throne, has been permitted to survey these Realms of Light; and I have brought him hither, to learn from thee wherein its Glory and its Happiness consists.

Elijah. That, *says the Prophet*, I shall gladly do; for 'tis our Meat and Drink in these blessed Regions, to do the Will of God and of the Lamb, to sing his Praise, and serve him with the humblest Adoration, saying, *Blessing, and Honour, and Glory, and Power, be unto Him that sits upon the Throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever: For he has redeemed us to God by his Blood, out of every Kindred, and Tongue, and People, and Nation, and made us unto our God Kings and Priests. Even so Amen.* And I likewise added my

Amen, to that of the holy Prophet.-----

The Prophet then enquired of me, on what account this great Permission and Privilege was given to me? (By which I understand the Saints in Heaven are ignorant of what is done on Earth; how then can *Prayers* be directed to 'em?)

I then rehearsed what I have here set down by way of Introduction: At which the holy Prophet broke forth into this Exclamation.

Elijah. *Glory for ever be ascribed to him that sits upon the Throne, and to the Lamb, for his unbounded Goodness, and great Condescension to the Weakness of a poor doubting Sinner.* ----- After which he said, Now give Attention to what I shall speak. And then he thus began:

Elijah. What you have seen and heard already, I am sure you never can relate, so as to make it understood: For it is beyond what Eye hath seen, or Ear hath heard, or what the Heart of Man is able to conceive; I mean of those not yet translated to this glorious State, nor freed from their gross Elemental Bodies: Nor is my being in the Body here any Objection to what I now assert; for though it hasn't been subject to the com-
mo

mon Lot of Mortals, Death; yet has it suffer'd such a Change, as has been in some sense Equivalent thereto; for it is made both Spiritual and Impassible; and is now no more capable of any farther suffering, than those blessed Angels are, that compass round the Throne: And yet in this consummate State of Happiness, I cannot utter all that I enjoy; nor do I know what shall be yet enjoy'd, for here our Happiness is always new.

Epénet. I then requested of the blessed Prophet a little to Explain himself, because I understood not how Happiness could be consummate, and yet admit of new Additions. For in the World below, we generally think that what is consummate, is compleatly finished. I humbly hope, *said I*, what I shall say, may not be taken as the Effect of a vain Curiosity, but that my Understanding may be cultivated, which yet retains but dark Idea's of these Heavenly Things.

Elijah. To satisfy your doubting Soul, and to confirm your wavering Faith, is the chief Reason of your being brought hither, through the Permission of the great Three-One; and therefore I would have you still, as any Doubt arises in your

Breast, to make it known. --- But as to that which you object, That Happiness cannot be consummate, and yet admit of new Additions, I must tell you, That when the Soul and Body both are happy, as mine now are, I count it a consummate State of Happiness: For through all the innumerable Ages of Eternity, it is the Soul and Body joyned together in the blessed Resurrection-State, that shall be the continued Subject of this Happiness. But in respect of the blessed Object of it, which is the Ever-Adorable and Blessed God, in whose Beatifical Vision this Happiness consists, it is for Ever New: For the Divine Perfections being infinite, nothing less than Eternity can be sufficient to display their Glory; which makes our Happiness Eternally admit of new Additions; and by a necessary Consequence our Knowledge of it shall be Eternally Progressive too.---- And therefore it was not without Reason that the great Apostle of the Gentiles, (who, in the Days of his Mortality, was once admitted hither as you are) affirmed, *Eye hath not seen, nor hath Ear heard, nor can it enter into the Heart of Man, to conceive, what God hath prepared*

for them that love him. And yet the Eye hath seen many admirable things in Nature; it hath seen Mountains of Christal, and Rocks of Diamonds, it hath seen Mines of Gold, and Coasts of Pearl, and Spicy Islands; and yet the Eye, that hath seen so many wonders in the world below, could never pry into the Glories of this Triumphant State. And though the Ear of Man hath heard many delightful and harmonious Sounds, even all that Art and Nature could supply him with; yet have they never heard the Heavenly Melody which here both Saints and Angels make before the Throne. And as the Eye han't seen, nor Ear heard, so neither can the Heart of Man conceive them; and yet the Heart of Man (the chiefest Work of the All-wise Creator in that Microcosm) is of so fine and curious a Composure, that it can almost conceive any thing that either is, or was, or ever shall be, in the World below; yea, what shall never be. Man can conceive, that every Stone on Earth shall be turn'd into the most Orient Pearls, and every Blade of Grass into the brightest and most shining Jewels: He can conceive, that every Particle of

Dust shall be turned into Silver, and the whole Earth into a Mass of pure refined Gold: He can conceive the Air to be turned into Chrystal, and every Star advanced into a Sun; and every Sun a thousand times more large and glorious than what they now behold it: And yet this is infinitely short of what the high Eternal Majesty (who is incomprehensible in all his Works of Wonder) hath here prepared for all his faithful Followers.

But that you may retain (*added the Prophet*) the best Idea of our Happiness, I here will briefly represent unto you (for Ages spent in this delightful Theme, would scarce suffice to tell it you at large) what 'tis those blessed Souls, who through the glorious Purchase of our bright Redeemer, are brought hither, are here deliver'd from: And for your better understanding it, I shall endeavour to conform my Words to your Capacity, by the comparing things that are here above to what you know below, although your Eyes have told you how infinitely Heavenly Things transcend whatever can be found on Earth. And in the second place, I shall represent (as far as your Capacity

Capacity will bear it) what is that Happiness the Blessed here enjoy.

First then, The Souls of all the Blessed here, are freed for ever, from whatsoever 'tis can make them miserable; the chief of which, you are not ignorant, is Sin: 'Tis only that, which brings the Creature into Misery, and intails it on him: The blessed God, at first, made all things happy; all like himself, who is supremely so; and had not Sin defaced the Beauty of Heaven's Workmanship, Angels nor Men had never known what is meant by Misery: 'Twas Sin threw the Apostate Angels down to Hell, and spoil'd the Beauty of the lower World: 'Twas Sin defaced God's Image in Man's Soul, and made the Lord of the Creation a Slave to his own Lust; and by so doing, plunges himself into an Ocean of Eternal Misery, from whence there's no Redemption: And sure 'tis an unvaluable Mercy, that in this happy Place, all the Inhabitants are freed, for ever freed from Sin through the Blood of our Redeeming JESUS: *To whom Blessing, Honour, Power, Glory, and Eternal Praises, be ascribed for ever.* Below, the best and holiest Souls groan underneath the Bur-

then of Corruption: Sin cleaves to all they do, and leads 'em captive oft-times against their Wills: *Who shall deliver me,* has been the Cry of many of God's faithful Servants, who at the same time have been dear to JESUS. Sin is the heavy Clog of Saints themselves, while they are Embodied in corrupted Flesh: And therefore when they lay their Bodies down, their Souls are like a Bird loosed from its Cage, and with an Heavenly Vigour mount up to this blessed Region, triumphing over Sin, with which below they still maintain'd a Combat. But here their Warfare's at an end, and *Death is swallowed up in Victory.* Here their bright Souls, that were below deformed and stained by Sin, are by the Ever-blessed JESUS, presented to the Eternal Father, *without Spot or Wrinkle.*

But Secondly, As here the blessed Souls are freed from Sin, so are they likewise from all Occasions of it; which is a great Addition to our Happiness. *Adam* himself in Paradise, tho' he was in his first Creation perfectly Innocent, and free from Sin, yet was he not freed from Temptations to it, which was his great Unhappiness: Satan got into Pa-
radise

radise to tempt him; and he too fatally yielded to his Temptations: He eat of the forbidden Fruit, and fell; and by his Fall, the Human Nature, and consequently his Posterity, are all corrupted: Sin, like a Gangreen, having eat into the Human Nature, and corrupted all Mankind. And that Corruption, which every Mortal harbours in his Breast, is a most dangerous, and oft-times prevailing Tempter. But here each blessed Soul is likewise freed from this: No Devil here can tempt them, nor no Corruption enter; nothing but what is pure and holy can find admission here. No sly Suggestions from that Apostate Spirit can molest us here: That Roaring Lion, that below is in a constant Motion, still traversing the Earth, and seeking whom he may devour, is, with respect to us in this blessed Region of Life and Immortality, bound fast in Everlasting Chains, and shut up safe in an Infernal Prison, doom'd to the Vengeance of Eternal Fire. Nor shall the World, (which by the Fall of Man has lost its Beauty, and is degenerated into a Shop of Emptiness and Vanity, and does by its bewitching Charms, and false Allurements, draw
Thousands

Thousands to Perdition) be any more a Tempter to those blessed Souls, who have through Faith and Patience overcome its Wiles, and arrived safely here. As strong as its Temptations and Allurements are to Saints themselves, who are still Militating with it in the World below, we that are here possessed of Heavenly Mansions, look with Contempt on all Terrene Enjoyments: We here are got above the World, and all that it can tempt us with; and through the Blood of our Triumphant JESUS, have got the Victory over it, as those bright Palms we bear do evidence. There is nothing here that can disturb our Peace, but an Eternal Calm crowns all our Happiness, being freed from Sin, and all Temptations to it. And as a Consequent hereof,

Thirdly, We here are freed from the Effects of Sin, and that is Punishment; which those that are confined to the dark Regions of Eternal Misery are ever groaning under, as that which they cannot bear, and yet as that which they must ever suffer. It was Sin that usher'd Death into the World below, and by Heavens high Decree, is the just Wage of it, a every Mortal finds: But through

the Conquest of the Prince of Life, the Lamb of God, slain from the Worlds Foundation, who by his dying overcame both Death, and him that had the Power thereof, the Devil, triumphing over Sin, and Death, and Hell; Sin, Death and Hell are banished hence for ever: For which, Eternal Songs of Praise and Triumph are ever rendered to his Holy Name.

These are the Things (*continued the great Prophet*) we are in this blessed state deliver'd from; and yet these make up but the least part of the Happiness of Heaven: Our Joys are positive, as well as privative: And what those are, I now proceed to shew you.

I. We here enjoy the *Beatifick Vision*, the Blessed Spring and Eternal Source of all our Happiness: But what this is, I can no more declare, than finite Creatures comprehend Infinity; only we find that it continually irradiates our Understandings, and fills our Souls with Joy unspeakable and full of Glory; and with a Love so flaming, that nothing but the blessed Author of it can satisfie; nor not Eternity it self can terminate: 'Tis the reflecting Brightness of the Divine Presence,

fence, and transcendently Glorious Emanations of his Goodness, that is the Life of our Lives, the Soul of our Souls, and the Heaven of Heaven ; and that which makes us live, and love, and sing, and praise for ever ; and which transforms our Souls into his blessed Likeness. The Saints below, whilst they are travelling towards this blessed Country, are in their Pilgrimage supported by his Everlasting Arms, by which they are enabled to go from Grace to Grace: But we that are safe Landed on the Haven of Eternal Happiness, *are changed from Glory unto Glory, even by the Spirit of the Lord.* But to bring things nearer to your Understanding ; By this beholding of God's Face, we have a real Participation and Enjoyment of his Love, and his blessed Smiles makes glad our Souls, and in his Favour we rejoyce continually ; *for in his Favour is Life.* And then by this blessed Vision of God, we come to know him above whatever any did below ; for it is a sight of him that irradiates our Understandings, and gives *us the Light of the Knowledge of the Glory of God, in the Face of Jesus Christ :* So that though it be impossible to comprehend

hend the Divine Majesty, (for *who can find out the Almighty to Perfection?*) yet we have here a perfect apprehension of his Naure and Divine Attributes.

II. We have here not only the *Beati-fick Vision*, whereby we see God as he is; but we have a real Enjoyment and Fruition of him; and thereby come to be united to him, and to live in him, and he in us. Whereby we come to be Partakers of the Divine Nature, which shines forth in us with a resplendent Brightness. In the World below, the Saints do indeed enjoy God in his Ordinances; but here we all enjoy him Face to Face: Below, the Saints enjoy God in measure, but here we enjoy him without measure: There they have some Sips of his Goodness, but here we have large Draughts thereof, and swim in the boundless Ocean of Happiness: Below, the Saints Communion with God is many times broken off, and discontinued; but here we have an uninterrupted Enjoyment of God, without Intermission or Cessation.

III. Here we enjoy the Perfection of all Grace: In the World below, the Saints see but in part, and know but in part;

part ; but here, that which is perfect being enjoy'd, that which is imperfect is done away. Below, Love is mixt with Fear, *and Fear hath Torment* ; but here, Love is perfect ; and *perfect Love casteth out Fear* : Here we love the blessed God more than our selves, and one another like our selves : We here are all the Children of one Father, and all our Brethren are alike dear unto us. Below, our Love was still divided, and run in several Channels ; but here our Love has but one Stream, and centers in the ever-blessed God, the Fountain of our Happiness. Our Knowledge likewise in the World below was very imperfect, seeing but darkly, as through a broken *Mirror* ; but here we see God as he is, and so come to know him as we are known. Our Joy is likewise here in its perfection ; in the World below it was interrupted by Sorrow and Sighing ; and it was necessarily so, for where there is Sin, there will be Sorrow : But here, all Sin (the cause of Sorrow) being done away, all Sorrow (the effect of Sin) shall likewise cease : Nay, our very Sorrow for Sin, when upon Earth, does (through the Bounty of our blessed Redeemer)

deemer) give an Accession to our Joy, now we are here.

IV. Here we have our Capacities enlarg'd, according to the Greatness of the Objects we have to contemplate; whilst we were in the World below, no Light could shine into our Minds, but through the Windows of our Senses, and therefore 'twas the blessed God was pleased to condescend to our Capacities, and to adapt the Expressions of his Majesty to the Narrowness of our Imaginations: But here, the Revelation of the Deity is much more glorious, and our Minds are clarified from all those Earthly Images, that flow through the gross Channels of the Senses. Below, our purest Conceptions of God were very imperfect; but here, the Gold is separated from the Dross, and our Conceptions are more proper and becoming the Simplicity and Purity of God. Below, the Objects of Glory were humbled to the Perceptions of Sense: But here, the sensible Faculties are raised and refined, and made the Subjects of Glory. Now therefore, that the Divine Light shines with direct Beams, and the thick Curtains of Flesh are spiritualized and transparent, the
Soul

Soul enjoys the clearest Vision of God! We now see, what we before believed of the glorious Nature of the Ever-blessed God, his Decrees and Counsels, his Providence and Dispensations. We here clearly see, that from Eternity God was sole Existing, but not Solitary; and that the Godhead is neither confused in Unity, nor divided in Number; that there is a Priority of Order, but no Superiority among the Sacred Persons of the ineffable Trinity, but that they are equally possessors of the same Divine Excellencies, and the same Divine Empire, and are equally the Object of the same Divine Adoration. Those *Ways of God*, that seem'd below unsearchable, and that we thought unlawful to enquire into, we here perceive to be the Product of Divine Wisdom, with so much Perspicuity and Clearness, that Truth it self is not more evident.

These things (*added the Prophet in a different Tone*) are some of those that constitute our Happiness.

Yet all these things are only what relates unto our Souls: But still the Happiness of the Inhabitants of this blessed Region is not compleat, until their Bodies

dies are raised, and re-united to their Souls; in which, through the Divine Munificence, my self and the blessed *Enoch*, do enjoy a more peculiar Preference, being translated hither in the Body, as Types both to the *Anti* and *Post-Diluvian* World, of the Resurrection of the Ever-adorable Son of God, and of all the Saints through him. Now because none but the great *Messiah* has been actually raised from the Dead, he being the first Fruits thereof, (for, as for *Enoch* and my self, our Bodies have not known Death, though they have received a Change equivalent thereto) it is therefore more difficult to declare what the Resurrection-state shall be, it being to be discern'd in its Perfection, only from his Glorious Body, to which neither that of *Enoch's* nor mine are comparable, in respect of the Glory thereof, tho' both are Spiritual Bodies. Of which I will now shew you the distinct Properties.

I. The Bodies of the Blessed here, at the Resurrection, shall be (as mine is now) *Spiritual Bodies*; and by your not only seeing, but touching me, (at which Word the holy Prophet was pleased to give me

me his Hand) you may be the better able to know what I mean by a Spiritual Body : That is, a Body rarified from all gross Allays of Corruption, and made a pure and a refined Body, and yet a substantial One ; not composed of Wind and Air, as Mortals below are apt too grossly to imagine.

Epenet. Here I intreated the holy Prophet to bear with me, if I acquainted him, that I always understood Spiritual as opposed to Material, and consequently that a Spiritual Body must be Immaterial, and so not capable of being felt, as I found his was.

Elijah. To this the Prophet replied, That their Bodies were Spiritual, not only as they were purify'd from all Corruption, but as they were sustain'd by the Enjoyment of God, without any material Refreshments, as Meat, Drink, Sleep, and Raiment, which was the support of our Bodies below. Have you not read (*said the Prophet*) that the blessed Jesus, after his Resurrection, appeared in his Body to his Disciples, when they were met together in a Chamber, and the Doors shut about them ? Which plainly evinces the Tenuity thereof ; and yet

yet he call'd to *St. Thomas* to come and reach his hand, and thrust it into his side, which shews it as plainly to be substantial. The *Beatifick Vision* is here what both our Souls and Bodies live upon, and are supported by for ever.

II. Our Bodies in the Resurrection-state shall be *Immortal*, and incapable of dying: Below, their Bodies are all Mortal, Dying and Perishing, and subject to be crumbled into Dust every moment: But here our Bodies will be Incorruptible, and freed from Death for ever; for *our Corruption here shall put on Incorruption, and our Mortality be swallow'd up of Life.*

Epen. Here I desired the Prophet to bear with me a little, whilst I gave him an account of my own Notions in this matter.

Elijah. Say on, for I am ready to resolve your Doubt.

Epen. I have learnt, said I, in the holy Scriptures, that Immortality is an Attribute that belongs to God only, and not to Men, especially to the Bodies of Men, which every Day's Experience tells us are Mortal. Therefore *St. Paul* tells *Timothy*, That God ONLY hath Immortality.

Elijah.

Elijah. When I say the Bodies of the Blessed here are *Immortal*, I intend it of Bodies in their raised State, that then they are subject unto Death no more : Man in his corruptible State is Mortal, and subject unto Death : And there is nothing more evident to all that dwell in the World below, and even the Bodies of all those glorified Souls that are here, are at this time kept under the Power of Death. But at the Resurrection-state, when they shall be raised up again, they shall then be Immortal. And as to what you urge from the Scripture, that the blessed *God has ONLY Immortality*, it is very true; he is most Eminently and Essentially so; whereas there is no Creature, either Angels or Man, that can in that strict Sense be said to be so. We are Immortal through his Grace and Favour, but God is Immortal in his Essence, and has been so from all Eternity; and in that sense may well be said *ONLY to have Immortality*. And therefore it will not be amiss for you to observe, That whatever the blessed God is, he is Eminently and Essentially so; in which respect 'tis likewise said of Him, That *He* *is* *Holy*.

Holy; and *there is none Good but God,* none Righteous, nor none Merciful but He: To whom be Blessing, and Glory, and Honour, and Praise, for ever and for evermore.

Epen. I have one thing more to be satisfied in, and that is, That seeing there is only your self and the Prophet *Enoch* that are permitted in the Body to be here, which you are pleas'd to say have suffered a Change equivalent to Death, but died not; what assurance have you that the Bodies of the Blessed that are now under the Power of Death shall be raised again? For I see they are gloriously blessed and happy without their Bodies, and seem not to have any occasion for them, they having been long since perished and rotted in their Graves: The greatest thing that I think can be said for it, is, That the ever blessed Jesus, the spotless Lamb of God, who was truly and really dead, is now alive, and *lives for evermore.*

Elijah. To this the Prophet, interrupting me, reply'd, What greater Proof can you desire than this?

Epen. What I have to say to that, is, That the Body of the blessed Jesus never

48 *The World to Come : Or,*
ver saw Corruption ; and that there is
no Instance of any Body that ever saw
Corruption, that was yet rais'd to Life
and Immortality.

Elijah. To this the Prophet again answered, That tho' 'twas true, there had been no such Instance, yet was the Resurrection of the Body as sure as the present Glorification of the Soul ; for as the blessed Jesus dy'd as a publick Person, so did he also rise again ; and therefore is said to be *the first Fruits from the Dead* : He is the Head of the Church, and cannot be compleat without his Body, who in their Order shall be rais'd up to be with him for ever. The Body shall be awak'd out of its dead Sleep, and as I was saying, quicken'd into a glorious immortal Life : The Body is an essential part of Man, as well as the Soul ; and tho' the Inequality be great in their holy Operations, yet their Concurrence is necessary : Good Actions in the World below, were indeed design'd by the Counsel and Resolution of the Soul, but perform'd by the Ministry of the Body : And every Grace expresses itself in visible Actions thereby. In the Sorrows of Repentance, Tears were

supply'd by the bodily Eyes; and in Thanksgivings, the Tongue was used to break forth in the Praises of God: And all the Victories over Pleasure and Pain below, were obtain'd by the Soul in Conjunction with the Body. And can you think, (*said the Prophet*) that the Divine Goodness will deal so differently with them, that the Soul should be everlastingly Happy, and the Soul be lost in Forgetfulness? The one Glorified in Heaven, the other remain in the Dust? From their first setting out in the World below to the Grave, they both ran the same Race, and therefore shall enjoy the same Reward. When the Crown of Righteousness and Glory shall be given to the Blessed at the great Day in the View of all, both Soul and Body shall partake of the Honour thereof. And this (*added the Prophet*) is, I believe, enough to satisfy your Doubt, as to the Resurrection of the Body.

Epen. To which I reply'd, That I had nothing further to object in that particular.—And then desired him to go on in describing the Glory of the Body in the Resurrection-state.

Upon which the Prophet thus proceeded:

C

Elijah

Elijah. I have already told you, That the Bodies of the Blessed shall be Immortal; but cannot for all that be so Immortal as God is, who is so Eminently and Essentially so, that, as you well observ'd, he is said ONLY to have *Immortality*; nor yet are they Immortal in the same Sense as are the blessed Angels, who being Immaterial Substances, are so created; whereas Man was created Mortal, and has his Immortality through the Purchase of the blessed JESUS, and Renovation of the Divine Image. Nor is the Immortality thus purchas'd for us, like that of the Apostate Spirits, who are Immortal too; but 'tis with such an Immortality, as brings along with it a greater weight of Misery. Their Immortality is such a Curse as makes them with a thousand thousand times that they might be annihilated: But that blessed Immortality which we enjoy, is that which is the Happiness of Heaven, and therefore rightly stiled, a *Glorious Immortality*, and gives us an assurance, that the Happiness we now enjoy, we shall enjoy for ever.

III. Another Happiness the Bodies of the Blessed here enjoy, is, That they are *Impassible*

Impassible, and so are made incapable of Sufferings: Below, the Saints themselves have oftentimes their Bodies made so many Shops of Misery; or like an Hospital, full of Diseases, which are the common Harbingers of Death; or when they are not so, are something worse than it; the Pains and Infirmities of their Bodies being such, as oftentimes makes Death much more desirable than such a Life. How many times are even good Men wrack'd with the Gout, or tortur'd by the Stone, with most exquisite and cruciating Pain? So that tho' they abound in the Fulness of all those things that Mortals count the Blessings of the Life below, yet are they thereby all imbitter'd to them by those tormenting Pains which have seiz'd upon their Bodies. And where this is not, but Men have healthy, strong and vigorous Bodies, they often meet with other Sufferings; and are expos'd to Hunger, Thirst, Cold and Nakedness; which renders their Lives very much uncomfortable: There, many times, they are shut up in Prisons, immur'd between stone Walls, and are as it were buried while they are alive, and are as Men

forgotten in the World. All which considered, must needs render their Bodies miserable while below.

But in this happy Regions there's no such Evils can attack 'em; here their Condition is extreemly different; no Curse can enter here, and such are all those things I have related, as being only the Effects of Sin. My Body is incapable of Suffering any Evil, either of Sin or Sorrow; but on the contrary, through the Grace of the blessed Son of God, is now become a Receptacle both of Light and Glory, and so shall all the Bodies of the Saints be likewise in their Resurrection-state. Which leads me to declare the Fourth Endowment, with which our Bodies shall be ever blessed.

IV. Another Happiness our Bodies shall enjoy in the blessed Resurrection-state, is, *That they shall be truly Beautiful*. And this is none of our least Privileges. For below, our Bodies are but vile Bodies, tending to Corruption; in the Grave, Worms gnaw and feed upon their Flesh, and thence proceeds a loathsome Savour; at the best, they are but Houses of Clay, and their Foundation is in the Dust: But here it shall be otherwise raised.

wise ; for the Bodies of the Saints shall be freed from those innocent Infirmities that were inseparable from *Adam* in Paradise, whose Soul united to the Body was the Fountain of the Natural Sensitive Life, which being in a perpetual Flux, there was a necessity of continual Repairs to preserve his Life in Vigour : Whereas in this blessed State, the Body shall be Spiritual in its Qualities, and the Principle of its Life supported by the Supernatural Power of the Spirit, without outward Nourishment ; and not only so, but a substantial and unfading Glory shall shine in them, infinitely above the perishing Pride of this World, and the Glory of the Flesh ; and be made like unto the Glorious Body of Christ, who will change our vile Bodies, that they may be fashioned like his glorious Body ; and this he will do, according to the working of that mighty Power, whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself : This Transcendent Beauty, which he will put upon the Body, shall be the Work of his own Hands ; and where Omnipotence interposes, nothing is difficult. For the Beautifying of a raised Body, and putting it into an Im-

34 *The World to Come: Or,*

mortal State of Glory, is as easie to the Divine Power, as the first framing it in the Womb.

V. Another part of our Happiness is, That *our Bodies shall be agile Bodies*, and move with an inconceivable Swiftnes; our Bodies, while below, are lumpish and heavy, and are as clogs to the Soul; but in the raised State it shall be otherways: Our Bodies shall be like the Chariots of *Aminadab*, and move far swifter than the Winged Fowls in the Aereal Heavens.

VI. Another thing in which our Happiness will very much consist, is, That *our Bodies then* (as mine is now) *shall be all pure*; and this is an exceeding Privilege; for though they should have all the other fore-mentioned Qualities, and be Immortal, Spiritual, Impassible, Beautiful and Swift, yet if they still were Sinful, it would blemish all the rest, and would even spoil the Happiness we here enjoy in Heaven, if Sin could enter here. But 'tis far otherwise; our Glory is, that here our very Bodies shall be pure, and have no Spot of Sin at all upon them. Below, indeed the Bodies of the Saints are clogg'd with Sin, and fetter'd with

Tempta-

Temptations, which makes 'em to cry out, *O wretched Man ! who shall deliver me from this Body of Death ?* But here they shall enjoy that blessed Redemption of their Bodies, which they wait for there.

VII. And to conclude, The *Bodies of the Saints shall*, in their Resurrection-state, *be glorious Bodies*; so glorious, that they shall have a near Resemblance to the glorious Body of our blessed Redeemer. And this the Divine Oracles inform us, as also how it shall be wrought : The Glorious Lamb of God, the blessed Jesus, He 'tis *shall change our vile and corruptible Bodies, and make 'em like to his own glorious Bodies*; 'Tis by his Power that the Saints Bodies, that by their being turned into Corruption, are *born in such Dishonour, shall be raised in Glory*; and in that blessed Resurrection-state, *shall shine more brightly than the Sun in this Triumphant Kingdom of their Father.*

And thus, my Son, *said the great Prophet to me*, have I inform'd thee briefly, wherein the Glory and the Happiness of this blessed State, we here enjoy, consists. Not that herein I have said the thousandth part of that which might be fur-

ther still related; nor could you understand it, if I should. For there are some things here that we enjoy, like the *white Stone*, and the *new Name*, which no One knows, but He that does receive it.

Epen. The holy Prophet having made an end, I humbly thank'd him for the Information he had given me: And told him, That though I was incapable (cloath'd as I was, with such a Lump of unrefined Flesh) to understand all I had heard, or utter what I saw, yet I had seen and heard enough for ever to convince me both of the Excellency and Reality of Heavenly Things: Which in the World below, so many question, and so few believe. --- But let it not offend my Lord, *said I to the Prophet*, if I desire yet further to be resolv'd in some few things.

Elijah. Speak, and I will endeavour to give you Satisfaction.

Epen. The first thing, said I, I would humbly ask, is, How the Blessed here, which are but Creatures, tho' thus Glorified, and therefore finite still, can have so perfect an Idea of the Incomprehensible and Infinite Three-One, to know him *so as we our selves are known*, as you
before

before affirmed, or else it was my weakness to misunderstand you so?

Elijah. In saying so, I did affirm no more than what the sacred Oracles contain: For the Apostle of the Gentiles, speaking in the Days of his Flesh to them that then inhabited the World below, told them, *they then saw through a Glass but darkly*; but that in these bright Regions *they should see him Face to Face*; that then himself *knew but in part*, but that when he was once got hither, he should *know him even as he was known*. But, my Son, said the Prophet, These words are not to be understood according to the Exactness of the Expression; for the Sun that lights the lower World, may as well be included in a small Spark of Fire, as the Incomprehensible and Infinite God may be comprehended by our finite Faculties: For beyond the fullest Discoveries we can possibly make of the Deity, there remains still an intire Infinity of Perfections, the Knowledge whereof is altogether unattainable by the most intelligent of all those glorious Spirits, that are the bright and the continual Attendants of the Throne: And therefore that Expression, *As we are known,*

58 *The World to Come : Or,*
known, which gave you so just an occasion to enquire into the Sense of it, is to be taken as a Note of *Similitude*, and not of *Equality* : The dim Light of a Candle as truly shines as the bright Luminary of the Day; but not with the same Extent and Splendor. And therefore the Sum of what I can say to this Point, is, That we have here as perfect a Knowledge of the blessed God, as Created Beings are capable of Receiving, or our own Hearts of Desiring.

Epenet. I then returned my humble Thanks to the great Prophet, and assured him, his Answer had intirely satisfied me, and that I found 'twas only the deficiency of my own Understanding that had given him that Trouble.

Elijah. Still you mistake the State that I am in, *replied the Prophet* ; for there is no such thing as Trouble here, nor can there be : For the diffusing of the Knowledge of the ever-blessed God, and setting forth his bright Eternal Excellencies, and the displaying of his Glory, is that which gives the Blessed here the greatest Satisfaction and Delight ; and which will ever do so, throughout the numerous Ages of Eternity.

Epenet.

Epen. Then, with an Air of greater Confidence, I told the holy Prophet, I had another Question yet to ask him.

Elijah. Say on, and I will answer you.

Epen. I saw among the many blessed Souls I passed by, as my bright Messenger convey'd me to you, some that appear'd to me to shine with greater Brightness than the other; which gave me a desire to be informed whether or no there be not among the Blessed different Degrees of Glory.

Elijah. The Happiness and Glory which all the Blessed here enjoy, is the Result of their Communion with, and Love unto, the Ever-blessed God, whose *Beatifical Vision* here, as I have said before, is the Eternal Spring from whence it flows: The more we see, the more we love; and Love assimilates our Souls into the Nature of the blessed Object of it; and thence results our Glory. This needs must therefore make a difference in the Degrees thereof: Not as though there were any want of Love to God, in any of the Blessed here, for that's impossible: There's not one Soul amongst the numerous Inhabitants of this bright Region, but what adores and loves the

ever-

Epen.

ever-blessed God with all his utmost Powers and Faculties. But then it follows, That as those Powers and Faculties are different, their Love must be so too, and so their Glory. Nor is there any murmuring or repining in one, to see another's Glory much greater than his own; but God is thereby magnified the more, as the Eternal Source of all their Happiness. Nor can there be room for a Thought to think it otherwise: Who can complain, when all the Faculties of each blessed Soul is so replenished with the bright Emanations of the Deity, that it can hold no more? The ever-blessed God is an unbounded Ocean of Light and Life, and Joy and Happiness, still filling every Vessel that is put therein, till it can hold no more; and tho' the Vessels are of several sizes, whilst each are filled, there's none that can complain. Besides, each blessed Soul is here wrought up, not only to an Acquiescence, but even to such a Satisfaction and Complacency in the divine good Pleasure, that all their Happiness consists therein. Thus, though the Stars below are each one glorious, yet since they are of different Magnitudes, *one Star exceeds*

exceeds another Star in Glory; and so, as the Divine Oracles inform you, it shall be in the Resurrection-state. My Answer therefore to your Question, is, That those who have the most enlarged Faculties, do love God most, and are thereby assimilated most into his Likeness, which is the highest Glory Heaven can give. Nor let this seem strange to you, for even amongst God's flaming Ministers, the blessed Angels, there are diversities of Orders, and different Degrees of Glory. And these perhaps were some of those you saw, as you pass hither.

Whilst I was thus discoursing with the holy Prophet, and with delight heard the Solution of those Doubts that I desired to be resolved in, a shining Form approach'd me, saying, *How! Epenetus here.*

I was surprized to hear my Name thus mentioned, and turning suddenly about, I soon perceived it was the Noble *Junius*, my late deceased Friend; who thus accosted me.

Jun. Dear *Epenetus*, I am glad to see you in these blessed Regions; but am surprized to see you here not yet divested of Mortality; Instruct me, Friend, by what

what means you came hither, and also how 'twas you obtained this Privilege; for the Unusualness of such a thing, is that which makes me so inquisitive.

Epen. I was so over-joy'd to see one of my old Acquaintance, and one with whom I had been so familiar in the World, that I essay'd to embrace him in my Arms; which he refused, telling me mildly, He had some time ago laid down his Body, which he had left below, resting in hope until the Resurrection; and that, though he was still indeed a Substance, yet 'twas a immaterial one, not to be touch'd by Mortal.

But how come you, (said he again more earnestly) to be brought hither in your Mortal and Unchanged Body.

Epen. I then related to him what I before had spoken to *Elijah*, and told at large in the prefixed Introduction to this Vision, of my Temptation and Deliverance.

Jun. Well, *Epenetus*, said the Noble *Junius*, I see then there was need enough of such a Lecture as I gave order to be set on foot in the poor World below, after my Death, to Evidence the Being of a Deity, against a sort of Men, far worse

worse than those in Hell, who both believe the Being of a God, and tremble at his Justice. But you, my Friend, *continued he*, that had so long made a Profession of his Truth, and had such great Experience of his Goodness; that you should after all be brought to question his Being and Existence, was indeed something more than ordinary; and what I hardly could have ever thought; and gives me fresh occasions to adore the ever-blessed God, who through his abundant Goodness has now deliver'd me from all those Snares the Enemy of Souls was laying for me; and thus preserved me to his Heavenly Kingdom: Blessed for ever be his holy Name.

The blessed *Elijah* having heard what my Friend *Junius* said, told me, he now would leave me to my Friend; and e're I was aware, the Prophet wing'd away. Who having left us, I address'd my self thus to my Noble Friend.

Epen. I could not doubt, said I, my dearest *Junius*, but that thou wert one of the blessed Inhabitants of this happy Region; for such a bright and flaming Zeal as that which in the World made thee so Eminent, must needs meet with suitable Reward.

Jun.

Jun. O *Epenetus*, answered he, wert thou but once divested of Mortality, thou would'st have other Thoughts than what thou hast: Thou would'st then see how infinitely short they fall of meriting the least Reward, that in the World below have done their utmost; and that 'tis only Grace, free and unmerited, that brings the Soul to Glory. For Heaven is purchased at no other Price, than that of the Redeemer's Precious Blood: Whose Dying Love, and whose Redeeming Mercy, is so unspeakably, so vastly great, Eternity will scarce suffice to utter it.

Epen. Well, said I, worthy *Junius* —

Jun. Call me not worthy (said he, interrupting me) for none are worthy here, but He that sits upon the Throne, and the blessed Lamb of God: And to ascribe all Glory unto him, is here a great part of our Happiness; for there are Myriads of Saints and Angels round the Throne, continually crying with a loud, but yet melodious Voice, *Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive Power, and Riches, and Wisdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Glory, and Blessing.* No, no, (continued he) my *Epenetus*, Here's no ascribing

ascribing any thing to Creatures: Here they that wear the brightest Crowns, cast them before the Throne, saying, *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive Glory, and Honour and Power.*

Epen. Dear *Junius*, bear with me, said I, a little, because I am still clogg'd with Mortality: O that I were but once divested of it! That I with thee might see the great *Three-One*, and seeing be transformed into his Likeness, which (as I have heard the blessed *Elijah* tell) is the Completion of all Happiness.

Jun. My dear *Epenetus*, (replied *Junius*, with an Air compos'd of Love and Sweetness) The *Beatifick Vision* is that which does indeed compleat our Happiness, and fills our Souls with Love and Joy that is inexpressible; and which is only known by them that feel it. But you must know, my *Epenetus*, the strongest and the most enlarged Faculties of all the bright Intelligences here, can bear but little of those radiant Effluxes of Divine Glory, they are so overwhelming: For there is no Comparison between the most Capacious of Created Beings, and the Ineffable Glory of the Great Creator.

Epen.

Epen. O Noble *Junius*, I reply'd, I readily believe what you have said: But yet methinks I am willing to know all I can, of that which I can never know enough of. And since I know there is nothing more delightful, than to be always exercised in the displaying of the Glory of the great Author of your Happiness; deny not, dearest *Junius*, to your Friend (for such you know I ever was and am) the Satisfaction of hearing from your Lips, the mighty Wonders of Divine Love; that I may joyn with you to sing his Praise: Display those Mysteries of his Providence, which to the World below are all *Enigma's*, but to your now enlarged Understanding, are seen in their true Light.

Jun. The Praises of the divine Majesty, O my dear *Epenetus*, will be the mighty Subject of our Song through all the Ages of Eternity; in which both Saints and Angels join together, and make up one great Chorus. — And therefore that which you have ask'd of me, I'll gladly undertake. That you may see, by that which he has done, that he alone is worthy of your Love, and of those Praises we ascribe unto him. For the most ardent

den

dent Love of all the blessed Saints and Angels here, is nothing else but the Reflection of his Love to us: For he that lay in Love's own Bosom, tells us, *We Love him, because he first loved us.* Since therefore, my dear *Epenetus*, the Love of God to us, is the Foundation of our Love to him, Let me present you first with an Idea of his Love to us, and the Advantages that we receive thereby, which are so very many, they are past reckoning up, the mighty Sum exceeding all Arithmetick can count. ---- But that I may, as you were intimating, set things in a true Light, I will first shew you how much we owe his Love and Goodness, for all his free and undeserved Favours vouchsafed to us in the World below. --- And therefore to begin :

First, In the World below, we ow'd unto his Goodness no less than all the Goods we were possess'd of: All that we were, and all that we enjoy'd, was wholly owing to him: *For it was he that made us, and not we our selves:* And we were in his Hands so like the Clay that is in the Potters, he might have made us any other Creatures: Nay more, we were so much that Negative from whence we were

were extracted, that had he pleased, he might for ever have left us to that first Nothing from whence we had our Being. Needs must his Love then be the first and original Fountain-Blessing ; all other Blessings being but as Conduit-Pipes, by which he does convey his Love unto us ; and he that sees not that thro' all, is blind. Perhaps a Man gets an Applause by his Wisdom, and through his Industry he heaps up Treasures ; but was it not from God he had that Wisdom ? And did not he both give and prosper all his boasted Industry ? Sure God as much gave us all we enjoy'd, as he that gives a Beggar a thousand Pound, gives him his Food and Rayment, and all that thousand Pounds can help him to, and which he had been otherways without.

Secondly, But then, besides all these more obvious Presents of his Bounty there are many things which in the World below we were deliver'd from that do as much in chance the Value of the Divine Goodness to us ; which, al though perhaps less conspicuous, are not less priz'd by those below, whom want of them makes sensible of their true Va

lue. Should I, my *Epenetus*, but lead your Thoughts unto the Gallies, and shew you there those wretched Captives that lie chain'd unto their Oars, exposed to all the Miseries and Hardships of a Tempestuous Sea; and yet do, through the Barbarous Usage that they meet with on the Shore, less fear the Ocean, than any Port, save Death: Or should I draw the Curtains of Sick and Dying Men, and open to you that sad Scene of Sorrow, on which so many Pine and Languish by Distempers, so very grievous to be born, that Death is rather to be chose than Life: Or should I bring you to the Hospitals, and shew you there the various Shapes of Human Miseries; wou'd you not, my dear *Epenetus*, think it a Mercy worth acknowledging, to be delivered from 'em? And ought we not to prize that divine Goodness, who has thus made us differ, and freed us from those various sorts of Miseries to which so many Mortals are exposed? Not but sometimes his Wisdom sees it meet to Exercise his own beloved Children with long-continued Sicknefs and sharp Pains, and other outward great Calamities: But this, my *Epenetus*,
is

is still a further Evidence of Love, and that he might preserve them from the far worse Contagion of their Sins, or cure them of the Evil Habits which they had contracted. Have you not seen, my *Epenetus*, (when in the World below) a tender Mother apply a painful Caustick to the Neck of her beloved Infant, when threatned with an Apoplexy? And have you not concluded from it, she thinks the trouble of an Issue an inferior Evil to Convulsion-Fits? So when we see the Ever-blessed God, our Heavenly Father, does send Infirmities and Crosses, to rescue those he loves from under Sins Dominion, we safely may conclude, he thinks Affliction a far less Evil than the Guilt of Sin; since he is too wise and too indulgent a Physician, to cure with such a Remedy as shall be worse than the Disease.

You may remember, *Epenetus*, That God by *Moses* gives the *Israelites* a Caution, lest Prosperity (which is so apt to make Men forget all but their Enjoyments) should make any of them say in their Hearts, *My Power, and the Might of my Hand hath gotten me this Wealth*; but on the contrary, commands them to Re-

membe

member the Lord their God, for it is He that gives them Power to get Wealth. And there was need enough of such a Caution; for we were too apt to forget that God gave us our Corn, and our Wine, and our Oil. --- But,

Thirdly, The Divine Goodness exceedingly recommends the Advantageousness of his Love to us, in that whilst we were below, he gave us so great an Earnest of Spiritual Goods, and of expected Joys, that made even that Earnest large enough to subsist upon with Comfort; and which really out-valu'd and far transcended all those Momentary pleasures it required us to forsake, to keep up a Title to Eternal Ones. —

But though the Mercies that the ever-blessed God bestow'd upon us in the Life below, were both so many and so great, made it a fit Theme to Praise him for Heaven; yet is his Love of a more lasting Date than any thing that's in the lower World: It does not with our Bodies, nor like (the usual Custom of) our Friends below, accompany us to our Graves, and leave us: No, *Epenetus*, God's Love appears most bright, when our dark Eyes are closed; and then cleaves

cleaves clearest to the Soul, when she forsakes the Body; giving each blessed Saint that arrives here, good ground to say of him, what *Naomi* did once of *Boaz*, That he hath not left off his Kindness to the Living and the Dead. And therefore, Now indeed (says our great Saviour's happy Favourite) are we the Sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: But we know, when he shall appear, we shall be like him. And what that is, is now my present Theme.

It is the Love of God, the ever-blessed God, my *Epenetus*, that gives us this Admission into Heaven: Heaven the bright Seat of so much Happiness, that we here scarcely count amongst our Joys, that Heaven is the Seat of them. And here the Excellency of the Things that we possess, does as much disappoint our Expectations, as in Fruitions in the World below, the Emptiness is wont to do. For you have already heard the Apostle tell us, *Eye hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither hath enter'd into the Heart of Man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.* And now, my *Epenetus*, our own Experience tells us so: Those pure refined Delights, that we enjoy

not only stoop not unto Sense, but are sublime enough even to transcend Imagination. For whatsoever our Fancy form'd below, as the most perfect Idea's, and most abstracted Notions of compleat Happiness, our own more happy Experience of greater, plainly Evince, came short of what we find. Heaven is a Soil, whose Fruitfulness is so confin'd to Joy, that even our Disappointments and Mistakes, when in the World below, do here contribute to our Happiness, which does so much partake of his Immensity, whose Gift it is, that even the Sacred Oracles themselves give but a Negative Description of it; and does not only remove our Thoughts from all that we enjoy'd below, but does exalt 'em above whatever we could fancy there. Nor will you wonder, *Epenetus*, that it should be so, if you will but consider, that here our Faculties are not only gratify'd with suitable and acceptable Objects, but are so heightned and enlarged, that our Capacities are both increased and filled. You know, that in the World below, a Child not yet released out of the homely Prison of the Womb, can there have no Idea's of those Delights, which by the

D

pleasing

pleasing Noises and the glittering Objects that will present themselves to him after his Birth, will be afforded him. And the same Child, whilst he continues in his Nonage, tho' he may with delight look upon Emblems finely drawn and painted, yet he can't imagine what Pleasure the same Objects will afford him, when Age and Study shall have ripen'd his Intellectuals, and made him capable of Understanding the Excellent Moralities couch'd in those curious Emblems. Such a double Advantage, *Epenetus*, among others, the admission into these sacred Mansions, brings to all those to whom that Blessing is vouchsafed. For besides that Set of Objects, if I may so speak, so new and so peculiar to this Place, that their Idea's could never once enter into their Thoughts before they were admitted hither; besides this, our now enlarg'd Capacities enable us, even in Objects not altogether unknown to us before, to perceive things formerly undiscern'd, and derive thence both new and greater Satisfaction and Delight.

Wonder not, my *Epenetus*, that in describing of these Glorious Things, I use Expressions you have not heretofore been used

used to hear; since my bright Theme is more above our Praises, than this blessed Region is above the Earth. For though my Language may seem Tumid and Aspiring, yet seeming Hyperbolies may well be used in the Description of Felicities, which makes the most Hyperbolies but seeming ones: For the Joys of Heaven appear (like what the Stars do to the World below, by reason of their Remoteness from them) extreamly little; though really in themselves they are so vast, that a less than the largest is much greater than the biggest Object upon Earth; nay, than the whole Earth itself. And therefore, *Epenetus*, I endeavour (considering you are still cloath'd with Mortality) to give you an account of Heavenly Things, by Representations transcending what they appear to you, that I may thereby give you Notions less inferior to what they truly are.

For here, my *Epenetus*, the Blessed enjoy Happiness enough to rectifie all those mistaken Notions we had form'd to our selves of it, below: We are instructed in both how to Name and Rate all the Felicity which we possess, which is made up of the Confluences of Perfection, and

Perpetuity of all true Joys: Being made happy, (unlike to what Philosophy pretends to do) not by the Confinement, but full Fruition of our utmost Desires, which neither fail in the choice of their Objects, nor miss in the enjoyment of them; but are unerringly Just, and infallibly Accomplish'd. Here we not only see, but are made like those blessed Saints we in the World below so much admir'd. Those Spirits of Just Men made perfect, of which the Divine Oracles have told us, are here our constant and familiar Company, into whose blessed Society we are not only welcome, but increase it. Here likewise we behold those Glorious Spirits, whose Nature does invest them with so bright a Lustre, that all the Disadvantage their Disguises gave 'em, when they appear'd to us below, would scarce suffice to hinder us from making them the Objects of our Adoration.

But above all, We here behold, my *Epenetus*, (a Sight worthy the Dying for *nies*, that Blessed LAMB of GOD, slain from *im* the World's Foundation in the Divine *nat* Decree; that Glorious SAVIOUR, *oke* whom the Scriptures does so much *his b* *exce* *a S*

excellently entertain us; and who having done and suffer'd so much for us, does so highly deserve of us, both upon the score of his infinite Perfections, and upon the account of his inestimable Benefits. Yes, *Epenetus*, here we behold that holy and divine Person, who, when he did vouchsafe to pitch his Tent among the Sons of Men below, and dwell with them on Earth, thereby to fit 'em by his Merits and Example to dwell with Him in Heaven, did in so admirable a manner mix an awful Majesty with an humble Meekness, and the assum'd Infirmities of his Humane Nature with the Coruscations of his Divine; expressing in his whole Life so Perfect and Exemplary a Virtue, with so much Sweetness and Gentleness towards those that were Aspirers to it, though they came most short of it, that even the Jews themselves could say of him, *That he had done all things well*: Nay more; his very Enemies, that were imploy'd to apprehend him as a Malefactor, confess'd to those that sent 'em so to do, *That never Man spake like him*. But there, my *Epenetus*, his blessed Son of God was in the form of a Servant, which he put on, that he

78 *The World to Come: Or,*
might suffer for us, and exercise his
Priestly and Prophetick Function in the
World below: But here we see him in
that Regal State and Condition that be-
longs to him, by Vertue of his Kingly
Office, on the account whereof he is
stiled, *The King of Kings and Lord of*
Lords, all Power and Authority being
invested in him, both in Heaven and
Earth, encompassed with such radiant
Majesty and shining Splendor, that we
may well esteem him, what the great
Evangelick Prophet long since call'd
him, **THE ADMIRABLE**. For here our
ravisht Souls, by an attentive Con-
templation of his Glories, still find more
Cause to imitate the Spouse in *Solomon's*
Mystick Epithalamium, who having dwelt
upon the Beauty of the several Excellen-
cies that concurr'd to the accomplishing
the Divine Bridegroom, breaks out into
this *Epiphonema*, *He is altogether Lovely*.
His sparkling Eyes appear, in his ex-
alted Glory on the Throne, (what the
beloved Disciple long since represented
them) like *Flames of active Fire*, and
does into the ravisht Breasts of the Be-
holders, shoot Flames as Pure, as Holy
and as Deathless, as what the Seraphim
then

themselves consists of. And surely, *Epenetus*, since the Divine Oracles do assure us, as I have said already, *It never enter'd into the Heart of Man to conceive what God has here reserved for those that love him*; that Glory can be but imperfectly express'd by the bare Epithet of *Inconceivable*, with which the blessed God rewards the meritorious Sufferings and Obedience of the *only begotten Son of his Love*, for whose sake he is pleased to confer on all the numerous Company of his Elect, such unimaginable Glories. He that vouchsafes unto so many of his Servants a *Brightness*, like that of the Stars, you cannot but think, *Epenetus*, does communicate a far more radiant Lustre to the SON OF RIGHTEOUSNESS; although your present Mortal State denies you to behold the Brightness of his Glory.

But all this glorious Greatness of our blessed Redeemer, does yet not make his Kindness less Familiar, but only more Obliging: For he disdains not, even after his Ascension hither, to say, *Behold, I stand at the Door and Knock; if any Man hear my Voice, and open the Door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and*

80 *The World to Come: Or,*

he with me. And that King in the Parable, by whom our blessed Lord is represented, is pleas'd himself to welcome each individual trusty Servant, with a peculiar, *Well done good and faithful Servant.*

Wonder not, *Epenetus*, that I seem so solicitous to give you an account of the high Dignity and super-Eminent Felicity of our Exalted Saviour, and that I have endeavour'd thus to let you know that the bright Sun of Righteousness is now incapable of suffering Eclipses, but shines with an unclouded and unequal'd Splendor; and that I now see *Jesus*, who (as the Author to the *Hebrews* speaks) *was made a little lower than the Angels, Crowned with Glory and Honour.* For it makes Heaven to be more Heaven to me, to find him Reigning here, who suffer'd so much for me in the World below. And our Redeemer's Happiness, which is so great, and so ineffable, brings an Increase to ours, according to the Ardency of our Love to him. Nay further, *Epenetus*, let me add, That tho' our Joys are here so great, they do not need endearing Circumstances, yet does it make our Happiness more happy

as 'tis a Proof of our Redeemer's Love,
than as it is a Donative of his Bounty.

If it was matter of Rejoycing to the disgrac'd Apostles, that they were counted worthy to suffer Shame for his Name; how much, think you, is their Joy, now they are admitted to reign with him? his having supported the Hardships and Toils, to which the afflicted Condition of our Mortality was expos'd, did so much alleviate them, and refresh us under them, that even in this Sense also it might be truly said, *The Chastisement of our Peace was upon him, and by his Hurts we were healed.*

But can you think, *Epenetus*, that he that has reliev'd us even by his Cross, does not do more for us by his Crown? Here he not only does admit, but even does invite each faithful Servant to no less a Blessing than to enter into his Master's Joy. So rich a Source of Happiness did Christ make himself to us, in all his Capacities and Conditions, that in Earth and Heaven it was and is his gracious and constant Employment, to share our Griefs, or to impart to us his Joys; and either lessen our Miseries by his Sufferings, or increase our Happiness by his Felicity.

Having thus treated of the Happiness of those Cœlestial Mansions, resulting from the Beatifick Sight of our Redeeming Lord, the Crown of all our Blessedness, I now proceed to tell you, *Epenetus*, what you perhaps may have observed already, That here we do not only see our Elder Brother, *Christ*, but also our *Friends, Kindred and Relations*, that in the World below lived in his Fear, and died in his Favour; which is a large Addition to our Happiness. Nor do we only know our Friends, Relations and Contemporaries, but all the Saints that lived in all the Ages of the World. Thus, though *Elijah* (whom I found discoursing with you) liv'd in the World below long time before the blessed *Messiah* was made Flesh, yet you no sooner saw, than you straight knew him; and so you will do *Adam* also, when you see him. Nor can I think this a New Notion to you, since you might long ago have learnt it from the Sacred Oracles: Our blessed Saviour himself having told us, not only that the *Children of the Resurrection shall be like the Angels*, (who in the Visions both of the Prophet *Daniel*, and the Apostle *John*, appear to be acquainted

acquainted with each other) but also in the Parable of the miserable Rich Man and the happy Beggar, the Father of the Faithful is represented as knowing not only the Person and present Condition, but also the past Story of *Lazarus*: And the Apostle of the Gentiles did (when in the World below) expect his Converted and Pious *Thessalonians* to be his Crown, at that great Day, when the having turn'd many to Righteousness, shall (as the beloved *Daniel* tells us) confer a *Star-like and Immortal Brightness*: And I am sure, my *Epenetus*, you have often read of the Transfiguration of the blessed Redeemer in the holy Mount, where *Moses* and *Elijah* were discoursing with him; and then you can't forget how readily the three Disciples knew 'em: This was no other but a Type of Heaven, where all the Saints are known to one another. Think you our Knowledge here is less than that which *Adam* had in his first State of Innocence? And yet you know that *Adam* knew *Eve* his Wife when she was first brought to him, and told her, she was *Bone of his Bone, and Flesh of his Flesh*. ----- But what need further Instance? Your own Experience has

84 *The World to Come: Or,*
has already told you that 'tis so: And
were you but divested of Mortality, as
in few Days you will, you'll find it with
far greater Evidence.

But let me shew you, my dear *Epe-
netus*, the great Advantage that the
Knowledge of each other here, does
bring to all the Blessed.

Here 'tis the Blessed dwell in an un-
interrupted perfect Union and Com-
munion with God and with each other;
but without Knowledge, can be no A-
greement; and without Agreement, no
Communion; and where there's no Com-
munion, there's no Happiness: So that
to think we did not know each other
here, would be to think us short of Hap-
piness. Here, *Epenetus*, the General As-
sembly of the First-Born, as they re-
ceive their Happiness from the bright
Vision of the Ever-blessed God, so they
communicate the purest Pleasure to each
other, an unfeigned ardent Love uniting
all that pure Society. On Earth, our
Love was kindled either from some Na-
tural Relation, or other Civil Tye; or
else on the account of some visible Ex-
cellencies, that render a Person worthy
of our Choice and Friendship: But here,
our

our Reasons are far greater, and the Degrees of Love incomparably more fervent: For in this Supernatural State, all carnal Alliances and Respects do cease. The blessed Apostle, even when on Earth, told us, *If he had known Christ after the Flesh, he knew him so no more.* For by the Resurrection and Ascension of our blessed Lord, he was transported into another World, and had Communion with him as an Heavenly King, without low regards to the Temporal Priviledge of Conversing with him on Earth. Our spiritual Relation is more near and permanent than the strictest Band of Nature. Here we have all relation to the same Heavenly Father, and unto Jesus Christ the Prince of Peace, and Head of our happy Fraternity. The principal Motives of Love, even on Earth, are the inherent Excellencies of a Person. Wisdom, Holiness, Goodness, Fidelity, are mighty Attractives to Affection, and produce a more intimate confederacy of Souls, than Propinquity of Nature, or any other Carnal Respects. Virtue is amiable in an Old Person, though wrinkled and deform'd; and Vice is hateful in a Young Person, though beautiful.

beautiful. And you have seen on Earth, my *Epenetus*, clearer Eyes than those of Flesh, a purer Light than what is Sensible, a diviner Beauty than what is Corporal, and a nobler Love than what is Sensual; which made the Royal Prophet declare, *That all his delight was in the Excellent.* But even Spiritual Love has its Allays below. For there are Relicks of Frailty in the best of Men there, and some Blemishes that render them less amiable. But here the Image of God is cempleat, by the Union of all the glorious Vertues requisite to its Perfection; and every blessed Soul agrees exactly with the first Exemplar; a Divine Beauty shines in them, ever durable; a Beauty that darts no Contagious Fires; a Beauty that's inviolable, and cannot suffer Injury.

The true Worth of the Saints below is very little visible, the least part of it being seen: The Earth is fruitful in its Plants and Flowers, but its Riches are in Mines of Precious Metal, and Veins of Marble hidden in its Bosom. True Grace appears in sensible Actions; but its Glory is within. But here their Excellencies are in open view, the Glory of

the Blessed God is revealed in them: And ah! how attractive is the Divine Likeness to an holy Eye! How does it ravish me to see my Fellow-Saints shining with an Immortal Loveliness! And their Love is reciprocal, proportionable to the Cause of it. An equal constant Flame is here preserv'd by pure Materials. Here every one is perfectly Amiable, and perfectly Enamour'd with each other. And O how happy is this State of Love! Well might the *Psalmist* break out into that Rapture, *Behold, how good and pleasant it is for Brethren to dwell together in Unity!* Had he then seen that happy Union which he now here enjoys with all the Faithful Ones. Love is the Beauty and the Strength of all Societies, and the great Pleasure of our Lives below. How Excellent then must the Joy be of the Blessed here; who witness the Accomplishment of what our Saviour pray'd for, when on Earth! *That they may be One, as thou Father art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be One in Us.* The blessed God is absolutely One in his glorious Nature and Will, and therefore is unalterably Happy; and the in-dissoluble Unity of the Saints Love, is a bright

bright Ray of the Essential Unity between the Sacred Persons. Here Love effectively transforms one Soul into another, and makes the Glory of each Saint redound unto the Joy of all. Such is the Power of this Cœlestial Fire, where we burn, it melts and mixes Souls in such an intire Union, that by Complacence and an intimate Joy, the Blessedness of All is, as it were, proper to Every One; as if Every One were plac'd in the Heart of All, and All in the Heart of Every One. And sure where there is Love like this, all needs must be Delight. And how can it be otherwise? since in this blessed Society there's a continual Receiving and Returning of Love and Joy, with mutual Reciprocations of Endearment; and their Conversation and Intercourse is Ravishing. Think, *Epenetus*, what an Entertainment of Love and Joy there is, in the Presence and Discourses of dear Friends below; how do their mutual Aspect, like a Chain compos'd of Spirits luminous and active, fasten and draw their Souls to one another? And though there be no Friendship on the Earth without Allays, yet the Felicity of Love consisteth in their

Con-

Conversation. But whatsoever is Com-
mendable in Friendship, is in Perfection
here: And whatsoever is an Allay, oc-
casion'd by Mens Folly or their Weak-
ness, is all abolish'd here. The Blessed
here with over-flowing of Affection, re-
count the Divine Benefits; and all those
admirable Methods, whereby the Life
of Grace was first began, preserv'd, and
carry'd on, amidst Temptations; the
Succession of Mercies, in the time of our
Hopes, and the Consummation of all,
in this time of our Enjoyment. Have
you not yet heard, *Epenetus*, the Melody
both Saints and Angels make about the
Throne? And how they all concur in
their Thanksgivings to God, for making
of them Reasonable Creatures, such as
are capable both of Loving and Enjoy-
ing Him; when they might have been
of the lowest Order in the whole Sphere
of Beings: For his compassionate Care
and Providence over them in the World:
But especially for his sovereign and sin-
gular Mercy, in Electing them to be Ves-
sels of Honour; and for his powerful
Grace, in rescuing them from the cruel
and ignominious Bondage of Sin: For
his free Love, that Justified them from
all

all their Guilt, by the Death of his only Son, and has now Glorified them with himself. We are never weary, *Epenetus*, of this delightful Exercise, but continually bless him for his Mercy that endures for ever. Yea, the winged Cherubims and Seraphims about the Throne, cry one to another, to express their Zeal and Joy, in celebrating his Eternal Purity and Power, and the Glory of his Goodness. And O how unspeakable is the Pleasure of this Concert! Every Soul being Harmonious, and contributing his part to the full Musick of Heaven. O could the World below but hear the Eccho of those Songs wherewith the Heavens above resound, those Songs wherewith the Saints do here triumph, in the just Praise and solemn Adoration of the King of Spirits, how would it inflame their Desires to be join'd with them!

But besides all that Happiness that does here accrew to us, by the Knowledge of our Friends, Kindred and Relations, and that which does result from that Communion we have here with God, and with each other; it is to me, my *Epenetus*, a mighty Happiness I here enjoy

enjoy, in Understanding satisfactorily all those deep and obscure Mysteries of Religion, which the profoundest Rab- bies of the World below were not a- sham'd to own they could not fully com- prehend; but after all the Toil and In- dustry of their most anxtious Enquiries, were reduc'd to sit down with the great Apostle, *Rom. 11. 3.* in Admiration of that Depth, whose Bottom they can ne- ver fathom. And I acknowledge that it is to me a mighty Pleasure, that here I understand those obscure Passages of the sacred Oracles, which notwithstanding all that bold Criticks and learned Expositors have attempted to Illustrate, do to the World below remain so still: Nor can it well be otherwise, because they can't discern how exquisitely the several Parts of Scripture are fitted to the several Times, Persons, and Occur- rences, wherein their all-fore-seeing Author intended most to use them; all which are obvious to us here; and con- sequently we discern a perfect Harmony between those Texts, that in the World below seem'd most at variance. Here, *Epenetus*, we have clearly Expounded to us those Riddles of Providence, which have

have but too often tempted even good Men upon Earth to question God's Conduct in the Government of the World; whilst the Calamities and Persecutions of Vertue and Innocence seem approv'd by him, who accumulates Prosperity on their criminal Opposers. Here we are thoroughly convinced, that all those seeming Irregularities which the Heathens thought fit to impute to the giddy Whimsies of a Female Deity, are not only consistent with the Divine Justice and Goodness, but are Productions of it. And though such a Belief do, to intelligent Persons in the World below, seem a great piece of Self-denial, yet here it does appear as Reasonable, as there they find it Difficult. For *Bildad* (who was one of *Job's* well-meaning, but unkind Comforters) has told us long ago, *They that live upon Earth are but of yesterday, and know nothing, because their Days there are but a Shadow*: And the shortness of their Transitory Lives not permitting them to continue long enough Spectators there, to see above a Scene or two at most of that great Play acted by Mankind on the Stage of the World, it is no wonder that they are apt to harbour

sinister

sinister Thoughts of the Contriver of a Plot, neither the Beginning nor End whereof they are acquainted with. But when once the whole of the Divine Conduct in the Administration of Things shall be disclos'd, as here it is, all those Revolutions and Occurrences of Empires, States, Families, and particular Persons, which Mortals are so prone to quarrel with below, do here to us appear so just, so requisite and seasonable, that those very things that while we were on Earth tempted us to Deny God, do here engage us to Praise him: And indeed, we are not so properly Satisfy'd, as Ravish'd, with the Beauty of his Providence.

But, *Epenetus*, besides this General Providence of God, of whose Adorable Wisdom in the Conduct whereof I have been speaking; we are here especially transported with Wonder and Gratitude at those Discoveries of the Divine Goodness, which he is pleas'd to make, of the Reasons of his Dispensations towards each one in particular. O *Epenetus*, I have seen towards my self, not only the Necessity and Justice, but even the Mercifulness of those very Afflictions that

have but too often tempted even good Men upon Earth to question God's Conduct in the Government of the World; whilst the Calamities and Persecutions of Vertue and Innocence seem approv'd by him, who accumulates Prosperity on their criminal Opposers. Here we are thoroughly convinced, that all those seeming Irregularities which the Heathens thought fit to impute to the giddy Whimsies of a Female Deity, are not only consistent with the Divine Justice and Goodness, but are Productions of it. And though such a Belief do, to intelligent Persons in the World below, seem a great piece of Self-denial, yet here it does appear as Reasonable, as there they find it Difficult. For *Bildad* (who was one of *Job's* well-meaning, but unkind Comforters) has told us long ago, *They that live upon Earth are but of yesterday, and know nothing, because their Days there are but a Shadow*: And the shortness of their Transitory Lives not permitting them to continue long enough Spectators there, to see above a Scene or two at most of that great Play acted by Mankind on the Stage of the World, it is no wonder that they are apt to harbour
sinister

sinister Thoughts of the Contriver of a Plot, neither the Beginning nor End whereof they are acquainted with. But when once the whole of the Divine Conduct in the Administration of Things shall be disclos'd, as here it is, all those Revolutions and Occurrences of Empires, States, Families, and particular Persons, which Mortals are so prone to quarrel with below, do here to us appear so just, so requisite and seasonable, that those very things that while we were on Earth tempted us to Deny God, do here engage us to Praise him: And indeed, we are not so properly Satisfy'd, as Ravish'd, with the Beauty of his Providence.

But, *Epenetus*, besides this General Providence of God, of whose Adorable Wisdom in the Conduct whereof I have been speaking; we are here especially transported with Wonder and Gratitude at those Discoveries of the Divine Goodness, which he is pleas'd to make, of the Reasons of his Dispensations towards each one in particular. O *Epenetus*, I have seen towards my self, not only the Necessity and Justice, but even the Mercifulness of those very Afflictions that

that I once (when upon Earth) imputed to his Severity: And I am now fully convinced, no Stroke I met with in the World below, (and you can tell, my *Epenetus*, that there I met with many, as well as great Afflictions) either came sooner, or fell heavier, or staid longer, than the Occasion that extorted it, exacted. And I am satisfied, my Hopes were never disappointed, but to secure my Title to better things than what I hoped for. Nor was my Interest (or what at least I thought then to be so) ever prejudiced, but when 'twas more to the Advantage of what was truly such. Yes, *Epenetus*, all that unwelcome Darkness, that on Earth surrounded my Purblind Understanding, is now vanish'd, and did so at the first dawning of this bright Eternal Day; wherein the Resolution of all those Difficulties, which upon Earth not only exercis'd but distress'd my Faith, is granted to Reward it.

Here, *Epenetus*, (to draw to a Conclusion) we do not only converse with Saints and Angels, but with that far more infinitely Glorious Deity, who made them what they are, without at all impoverishing

impoverishing Himself: Here we not only enjoy Heaven, but its Maker, God; and see Him as He is, who is our All in All: Comprising all the Goods we value in the Creatures, more eminently and fully, than the bright Luminary of the Day excels the twinkling Tapers of the Night. For we are here so taken up with the Contemplation and Fruition of that Glorious Object, (in whose Infinity all Goods are both included and dilated) that Ages numberless, as are the Joys the *Beatifick Vision* doth abound with, will scarce afford us leisure for a diversion to any other Pleasures than those it self Creates; which are so numerous and so intire, that we desire nothing that we have not, except more tongues to sing more Praises to the blessed God, or a Capacity to pay him greater Thanks for what we have: And when those Desires does his gracious Acquittance make, in being but conceiv'd, accomplish'd. For otherwise the Residents of these bright Mansions do scarce know any other Want, than that of Need wish; the compleat Blessedness of our condition reducing us to a happy Uselessness of Wishes, by giving us so full a

Pre-

that I once (when upon Earth) imputed to his Severity : And I am now fully convinced, no Stroke I met with in the World below, (and you can tell, my *Epenetus*, that there I met with many, as well as great Afflictions) either came sooner, or fell heavier, or staid longer, than the Occasion that extorted it, exacted. And I am satisfied, my Hopes were never disappointed, but to secure my Title to better things than what I hoped for. Nor was my Interest (or what at least I thought then to be so) ever prejudiced, but when 'twas more to the Advantage of what was truly such. Yes, *Epenetus*, all that unwelcome Darknes, that on Earth surrounded my Purblind Understanding, is now vanish'd, and did so at the first dawning of this bright Eternal Day ; wherein the Resolution of all those Difficulties, which upon Earth not only exercis'd but distress'd my Faith, is granted to Reward it.

Here, *Epenetus*, (to draw to a Conclusion) we do not only converse with Saints and Angels, but with that far more infinitely Glorious Deity, who made them what they are, without at all impoverishing

impoverishing Himself: Here we not only enjoy Heaven, but its Maker, God; and see Him as He is, who is our All in All: Comprising all the Goods we value in the Creatures, more eminently and fully, than the bright Luminary of the Day excels the twinkling Tapers of the Night. For we are here so taken up with the Contemplation and Fruition of that Glorious Object, (in whose Infinity all Goods are both included and dilated) that Ages numberless, as are the Joys the *Beatifick Vision* doth abound with, will scarce afford us leisure for a diversion to any other Pleasures than those it self Creates; which are so numerous and so intire, that we desire nothing that we have not, except more Tongues to sing more Praises to the blessed God, or a Capacity to pay him greater Thanks for what we have: And when those Desires does his gracious Acceptance make, in being but conceiv'd, accomplish'd. For otherwise the Residents of these bright Mansions do scarce know any other Want, than that of Need with; the compleat Blessedness of our condition reducing us to a happy Usefulness of Wishes, by giving us so full a

Pre-

Pre-possession of all the Objects of Desire. Here Time, like Fire, having destroy'd whatever it does prey on, does at last die itself, and so goes out into Eternity. And here the Nature of our Joy is such, that tho' after some Centuries of Years, they may seem to wax Older, by having been enjoy'd so many Ages, yet do they really still continue as welcome and as fresh, as at the first: 'Tis the peculiar Property of our Felicity; it Always is the Same, yet Ever New. Weariness argues Imperfection, either in the Object, or the Appetite; the former of which is impossible in God, and the latter ceases here.

For our Felicity is here so great, there is no need of Variety to be a part of it: Or if it does admit Variety, 'tis such as one as consists only in the further Knowledge of its first Object, God; like that which may be seen on Earth in the diversified Refractions of the same sparkling Diamond. In God there is, if we may properly so speak, such an Identical Variety, that the Fruition of him both satisfies and creates Desires: Tho' That without Satiety; and This, without Disquiet. Other Delights do, like the

Cloak

Cloaths Men usually wear, grow stale, and quickly are worn out; whereas those Heavenly Pleasures we enjoy, participate of that Prerogative of the Garments of the *Israelites* in the Wilderness, not impairing by being used long: But as the Needle once touch'd with the Loadstone, would never uncompell'd forsake it; but after-Ages cling no less closely to it, than at the first moment of their Union: So do the Blessed here, with the same undiminis'd Freshness, ever possess their Joys, as if each moment were the first that they possess'd them in. And if our Happiness does not improve by our Enjoyment of it, it is perhaps because the Greatness of it does render it incapable of Increasing: Or if our Pleasures do admit Accession, they also do receive it, from the Assurance that we have that we shall taste them ever, and perpetually repeat the same renew'd Fruitions, to an Eternity; and dear'd by nothing more than by the quiet leisure it does afford us undistractedly to employ it in Celebrating of *Jerusalem's* Praises; and in a Condition, happier in that by it we are past Doing, than past Suffering Ill. In brief, Our In-

E

exhausted

exhausted Joys are here so Numberless, and so Immense, that we shall Need (as well as Have) Eternity it self to taste them fully.

But I remember, *Epenetus*, you still are in the Body, and may be tired with Hearing what I could be for ever a Relating; so vast is the Happiness that I possess, and so great Pleasure is there in relating it. I shall now therefore only further add one Property of our enjoy'd Happiness; and that is, That the vast multitude of blessed Souls, that are Partakers of this Joy and Glory, does detract nothing from each private Share, nor lessen the Propriety each happy Saint has in it in particular: This Ocean of Felicity being so Bottomless, that the innumerable Company of all the Saints and Angels never can exhaust it: Nor is this strange at all; for in the World below, which does consist of many spacious Countries, and many of 'em divided by large Seas from one another, each several Nation does alike enjoy the Benefit of Light; nor is there any can complain that they enjoy it less, because another does enjoy it too; but all enjoy its Benefit as fully, as if none else en-

joy'd

joy'd it but themselves. Indeed there is this difference between the Sun of Righteousness, and that which shines upon the World below, That whereas the Latter, by his Presence, eclipses all the Planets (his Attendants;) the Former, tho' radiant with a much greater Splendor, will by his Presence impart it to his Saints; and so the great Apostle of the Gentiles does inform you, where he says, *When Christ, who is our Life, shall appear, then shall we appear also with him in Glory.*

It is the Language of each blessed Soul to his Redeemer, *I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine.* For each have a peculiar claim unto him. And David (who, when he liv'd on Earth, was so well Skill'd in singing Songs of Praise to his Redeemer) says of all them that put their Trust in God, *That he shall abundantly satisfy them with the Fatness of his house, and make them drink of the River of his Pleasures:* As if he meant to insinuate, That as when a multitude of Persons drink of the same River, none of them is able to exhaust it, and yet each of them has the full liberty of drinking much as he can, or as much as he could, so none but himself should be allow'd

to drink of it: So whosoever enjoys God, enjoys him wholly; or at least, enjoys him so intirely, in relation to his Capacity, that the Fruition of whatsoever rests un-enjoy'd in God, is forbidden by the Immensity of the Object, and not the Pre-possession of his Rivals.

Thus, *Epenetus*, I have given you a brief Account of our *Cœlestial Canaan*. 'Tis not indeed the thousandth part of that which might be said; yet 'tis enough to let you see, it is a Land flowing with Milk and Honey: And may well enough serve to whet your Longing for a more Fruitive Experimental Knowledge of it; for none can fully know the Happiness we here enjoy, until they come to be Partakers of it.

Epen. Junius having finish'd his Excellent Discourse, I return'd him many Thanks; assuring him, that I was so far from being Tired with hearing it, that I was exceedingly Delighted, as well as Informed by it; and that I could not but be much pleased in hearing a Description of that Happiness, which, through the great Super-abounding Merits of our blessed Redeemer, I hop'd in a short time to be Partaker of. —

Jun. To wait with Faith and Patience (reply'd the happy *Junius*) until your Mortal Body be laid down, is what is now your Work: And then you'll know far more than I have told you. You'll hear, and see, and know things then, after another rate than now you do. Your Ears a'nt fitted now to hear those Melodies that Saints and Angels make before the Throne, nor can your Tongue repeat those Songs of Praise which here the Blessed make continually. Your Eyes (tho' strengthened above those of other Mortals) can't yet behold the Brightness of the Glory that fills this happy Place: Though I must grant what you have seen, has given you more suitable Idea's of it, than all that dwell below can make of Heavenly Things: Which is a Favour so great and inexpressible, that you have mighty Cause to magnifie his great exceeding Grace, through whose abundant Goodness you were admitted hither.

Epen. That blessed Work (said I) I never can begin too soon; and 'tis a Work I hope will never end, but be as lasting as the Cause of it. — But *Junius*, since I have had the happiness of this

Converse with you, May I not also see my Mother here? (For I am sure she is among the Blessed) She early did instruct me in the Things of God, and caus'd me every Day to read the holy Scriptures; her Pious Exhortations first of all made me look after Heavenly and Eternal Things; and on her Dying Bed, gave me a Charge, (whatever others did) to serve the Lord: She, I am sure, would much rejoice to see me in this Place.

Jun. Your Mother, *Epenetus*, is here indeed, and will, no doubt, Exult and Joy in God on your account, as she continually does on her own: But in this happy Place, Worldly Relations cease. Nor is there *Male and Female* here, but all are like the *Angels*; for Souls can't be distinguish'd into Sexes: And therefore all Relations here are swallow'd up in God: However, she whom you call'd *Mother* in the World below, you shall see presently. --- He had no sooner spoke, but taking me by th' Hand, far swifter than an Arrow from a Bow, we pass'd by several shining Forms, cloath'd in the *Robes of Immortality*, who seem'd to wonder at me as I pass'd 'em; which I thought was occasion'd by my being there in the poor
Rags

Rags of frail Mortality. ----- But *Junius* having brought me to my Mother, (for so I thought her, tho' then I saw a shining Form) said to me,

Jun. Farewel, my *Epenetus*, I have now done what you desir'd me: Your Guardian Angel will be with you straight, and Re-conduct you to the World below: Where, when you come, remember that you do not cease to Celebrate the mighty Wonders of Divine Love, who has so far indulg'd your Weakness, as to admit you hither, and with Corporeal Eyes to see the Immaterial Glories of the Blessed.

Epen. The Noble *Junius* having left me, I straight drew near the shining Form that stood before me, who, compass'd round with Rays of dazling Lustre, appear'd extreamly Glorious: I hardly could behold her for the exceeding Brightness of her Countenance, or else it seem'd to me so, because I look'd with more Intensity on her, than on *Elijah*, or the Noble *Junius*. But taking it for granted 'twas my Mother, I thus address'd her, *My dearest Mother, I joy to see you cloath'd in that bright Robe of Glory, as an Inhabitant of*

104 *The World to Come: Or,*
these blessed Realms of Light and Immor-
tality.

Mother. Dear *Epenetus*, (said my Mother to me) For what I am, to Him that's on the Throne, and to the Lamb, be all the Praise and Glory; for He alone it is has made me so. This Robe of Glory, which you see me wear, is only the Reflection of his own bright Beams! Ah, *Epenetus*, had not the Blessed, for ever Blessed, Redeeming *Jesus*, first cloath'd me with his Robe of Righteousness, I never should have worn this Robe of Glory. I do not ask you, *Epenetus*, (she continu'd) how you come thus to be admitted here; for I have had already from *Elijah*, a full account of that; and must acknowledge the Divine Condescension has been exceeding great in this Permission: for which, Eternal Praise be-given to Him. Ah, *Epenetus*! Thorough how many Dangers does Divine Grace conduct our Souls to Glory! I cannot think, but with the most admiring Thoughts of Divine Love, how near I once was to Eternal Ruine! I once was *Poor*, and *Blind*, and *Naked*. Cast out unto the loathing of my Person, and lay polluted in my Filth and Blood: But

the abundant Grace that found me in that wretched sad Condition, and yet to me made it a time of Love! *Wash'd me from all thy Filthiness, and Purg'd me from my Sin!* I once was nothing else but Darkness: But O Miraculous and happy Change! I now am full of Light, and Love, and Joy: I once was Poor and Miserable, but now I am Enrich'd with all that Heaven can give, or I receive: I once was Naked, and expos'd to Shame, but now I am adorn'd with Robes of Light and Glory: I once was under Sentence of Eternal Separation from the Divine Presence; but now I am possess'd of God, my only Life, and Joy, and Supreme Good: O how Transporting is the Comparison of these so wide and contrary Extreams! and O how pleasant is the bright Day of Eternity, after a Night so dark and so tempestuous! How does a vivid Sense of those past Evils, produce a far more lively Feeling and Fruition of my Happiness: This makes the Everlasting Hallelujahs, that I sing to my Victorious Deliverer, more raving, and more harmonious.

Epen. I must confess I was amaz'd to find my Mother in such an Extasie and

106 *The World to Come: Or,*
holy Transport: And could not forbear
saying, *Alas my dear Mother, you speak like*
one that is indeed in Heaven, and feel the
mighty Joys you are possess'd of!

Moth. O *Epenetus*, (she reply'd again)
You should not think this strange! The
mighty Wonders of Divine Love and
Grace will be the Subject of our Songs
forever. Nor should you call me *Mother*
here, altho' I once was so; for here all
such Relations cease, and are all swal-
low'd up in God, who is alone the Great
Father of all this heavenly Family: And
I must tell you, *Epenetus*, you're far more
dear to me, as you are one that love and
fear the Lord, and so through Faith are
his Adopted Son, than as you are the
Son born of my Body. 'Tis here our
greatest Mercy, that we have God, the
Fountain of our Happiness; and all that
we enjoy is in and through Him; who
is an Object that's every way so adequate
to all our most enlarg'd Capacities, that
in enjoying Him, we enjoy all that we
can ask or think.

Epen. I then desir'd to know if I should
tell her in what Condition I left my Fa-
ther and my Brethren in the World be-
low, when I was carried thither?

Alas

Moth. To this she answer'd, No: since I have put the Body off, I have with that too put off all Relations in the Flesh: Here God (said she) is All in All unto me: I have no Husband but the blessed Bridegroom of my Soul, he who is fairer than the Children of Men; who is alone desirable to me: Nor have I here any Relations else: We are all Children of one Father here, and Servants of one Master, whose blessed Service is our perfect Freedom. And as for those I left behind me in the World below, I have committed them to God, in whose good Pleasure I am happy, whatsoever it be. I shall be glad and heartily rejoice to see 'em all Heirs of this blessed Inheritance: For then I shall be well assur'd the Will of God is so. But if they should close in with the Grand Enemy of their Salvation, and refuse the Grace that's offer'd 'em, and thereby perish in their Unbelief, God will be glorified in his Justice, and in his Glory I shall still rejoice. But since, dear *Epenetus*, you must descend again into the World below, you cannot better shew your Love to God, and Zeal for the Promoting of his Glory, than by endeavouring to turn
them

them from the Ways of Righteousness: Nor do you know but that might be one end why this peculiar Privilege has been allow'd you.

Whilst I was thus discoursing with my Mother, a numerous Company, pass'd before me, cloath'd in long Robes, white as the Morning's Brightness, and purer far than any thing that ever yet deserv'd that Name, each having Crowns of Glory on their Heads, which sparkled forth resplendent Lustre; and each one carrying in their Right Hand a Palm of Victory: And as they pass'd by, I heard 'em say, *Salvation to our God, which sits upon the Throne, and to the Lamb: And another Company, who had a very glorious Appearance, and covered their Faces with their Wings, whom I took to be Angels, answered them saying, Amen: Blessing, and Glory, and Wisdom, and Thanksgiving, and Honour, and Power, and Might, be unto our God for ever and ever, Amen.*

I then enquired what that great Company were, that were array'd in Garments of so pure a White, with Palms of Victory in their Hands? And I was told they were the Noble Company of *Martyrs*, who having endured great Tribula

tions in the World, and laid down their Lives for the Word of God, and the Testimony which they held, had now their Robes washed in the Blood of the Lamb, and had Palms in their Hands in token of Victory. ----- I then ask'd from whence they came? And I was answer'd, They came from under the Altar, where they had been crying, *How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not Judge and Avenge our Blood on them that dwell on the Earth?*

Epen. I thought that all the Saints here had that Rest, and Peace, and Joy in God, which did not permit them to have any Thoughts of Revenge towards their fellow-Creatures: And I was the more inclin'd to think so, because many of them had pray'd for their Persecutors in the World below, even at the very Stakes, and when they have been under the Hands of the Executioners; and it seems strange to me, that meek and that forgiving Spirit should be alter'd here in Heaven. —

Moth. The Saints here do indeed possess that Rest, and Peace, and Joy in God, which is the Sum of all their Happiness; but having resign'd themselves intirely to the Divine Good Pleasure, they cannot

not but desire God's Will may be fulfilled in all respects; and therefore knowing that it is the Will of God to render *Tribulation to them that have troubled them*; and that he does design to glorifie himself, by bringing down his Judgments on the Antichristian Whore, who hath made her self drunk with the Blood of the Saints and of the Martyrs of Jesus, they cannot but desire the Will of God may be done, and that his Name may be glorified; which they know will be the Result of his executing Judgment upon the great Whore; for when *Babylon* is fallen, a new Song shall be put into their Mouths; and then it shall be said, *Rejoice over her, thou Heaven, and ye holy Apostles and Prophets, for God hath avenged you of her. Yea, then shall they sing, Alleluia! Salvation, and Glory, and Honour, and Power, unto the Lord our God; for True and Righteous are his Judgments; for he hath judged the great Whore, which did corrupt the Earth with her Fornication, and hath avenged the Blood of his Servants at her hand; and therefore Praise our God, all ye his Servants, and ye that fear his Name, both Small and Great. And again they sing Alleluiah. So that their crying under the Altar, How long,*

long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not
 avenge our Blood on them that dwell upon
 the Earth, is not out of any desire of Re-
 venge, but that God may be glorified
 for his Righteous Judgments.

Epen. Having declar'd my Satisfaction
 in her Answer; I desir'd to know whe-
 ther the Souls of the Blessed understood
 what Affairs were Transacting in the
 World below, and whether they had
 any Concern therein?

Moth. To this she reply'd, The Sum
 of all our Knowledge here, is to know
 God, the Fountain of our Happiness:
 But as to the Affairs of particular Per-
 sons, we are not concern'd with them;
 and are ignorant of 'em; being still fi-
 nite, tho' glorify'd Creatures: The be-
 ing Present in all Places, is an Attribute
 peculiar to God alone, *to whose sight every*
Creature is manifest. Tho' the Prosperi-
 ty or Adversity of the Church below in
 their Militant State, is represented to
 us by the Angels, who are *Ministring Spi-*
rits, sent forth to minister to those that shall
be Heirs of Salvation: And from what
 we learn by them, we are excited to re-
 new our Praises to him that sits upon
 the Throne, and to the Lamb, for ever.
 The

The admirable Providences of God in the Deliverance and Preservation of his Church, being what we reflect upon with the greatest Pleasure and Delight, and praise God for with the greatest Ardency of Affection, desiring also that his Glory and his People's Happiness may be Consummate, by the Redemption of the whole Church, which shall not be till the Bride hath made her self ready, and the mystical Body of Christ be compleated.

Epen. I then told her, I would only ask her one thing more, (for I believed my Conductor was ready to come for me) and that was, In what manner their time was spent in this blessed Place, and what their general Conversation with each other was ?

Moth. To this she reply'd, O my *Epenetus* ! How much does that Clog of Mortality you still bear about you, cloud your Understanding, even in these bright Regions ? You speak of Us as still cloath'd with Mortal Flesh, and consider not that here *Mortality is swallow'd up of Life*, and Time is chang'd into Eternity, without Succession or End. 'Tis true indeed, that in the World below, there's a continual Flux of Time, which is divided into

Hours,

H
an
thi
are
ma
but
her
her
B
Que
tion
only
enou
Ages
fant
Joy, a
more
ledge
how v
And a
do the
Autho
Happi
here, c
illustrate
of the I
How
Epenetus
Nature

Hours, and Days, and Weeks, and Months and Years: But here there's no such thing; here is no Night by which Days are distinguish'd, nor Circling Orbs that make the several Seasons of the Year; but one Eternal Undivided Point lasts here for ever. And therefore, *Epenetus*, here's no Time to spend.

But then, as to the other part of your Question, what our general Conversation with each other is? Eternity can only fully answer it: We all have Work enough to do, throughout the numerous Ages of Eternity; and that so very pleasant and delightful, it both creates our Joy, and still increases it. What is there more delightful to the Soul than Knowledge? And you may then soon think how vast a Field we have to trace it in; And as our Knowledge does increase, so do the Adorations we pay to the Divine Author of it: For this is our peculiar Happiness, that all our Disquisitions here, of whatsoever kind, tend to illustrate the high Praise and Adoration of the Ineffable THREE-ONE.

How many Wonders of the Deity, my *Epenetus*, do shine forth in the Works of Nature in the World below, which still
lie

lie hid and undiscover'd unto the most Elaborate Enquirers into them? How many things are there below, you know not how are done, and yet are well assured that they are? Who can tell how a Tree grows from a Seed, or a variegated curious Flower, from a poor simple Slip without any Diversity? And yet that so it does, is evident enough.

Why the Magnetick Stone attracts the Needle, or Amber picks up Straws, are some of the *Arcana's* of Nature, which yet puzzles the wisest of Mortals, to tell by that secret Sympathies it came to pass; altho' the matter of Fact be very obvious. These things are made intelligible here, and all their occult Causes laid open to our View, which likewise does excite our humblest Adorations and renewed Praises to Him, who is so *Excellent in Working*.

And then again, The wondrous Magnitude, as well as Contextures, of the Celestial Orbs, (which vain Astrologers in vain pretend to penetrate) are here both in their Causes and Effects, made known unto the Blessed, who being fill'd with highest Admiration, *adore the ever-blessed God* for all his Works of Wonder.

Not

Not that we have this Knowledge barely by a simple Intuition, but by the mutual Exercife of our difcurfive Faculties, whereby our Knowledge ftill becomes Progressive.---- Nor do I deny, but that by Intuition our here enlarged Faculties receive a great Addition: For here we at one View can behold more, than we can do Succelfively below in many Years: To which the Swiftnefs of our Motion does alfo much contribute.

But farther yet, The Works of God's Almighty Providence, and with what vondrous Wisdom he has over-rul'd and govern'd all Events, is fuch a Theme as well becomes us here to be continually contemplating; and which the more we view, the more we find occafion ftill to magnifie the great and glorious Name of the great Author of our Happinefs. Thefe Contemplations, *Epenetus*, has often been exceedingly delightful to me, when in the World below, where I faw things but very darkly, and loft much of the Beauty of them, by reafon of the dimnity that was upon my Purblind Understanding, by means of which I could fee far off. But now, that all my Intellectual Faculties are both enlarged and

and perfected, and I can see the whole, of what I then had but a short and an imperfect view of, how much more pleasant and delightful must it be ! How much more must it magnifie the Wisdom of the great Contriver ! To see Men eager in the Prosecution of their own Designs, and the fulfilling of their Lusts, not having a regard to anything besides the satisfying of themselves; and yet to see how all these things are over-ruled to the effecting of the divine good Pleasure, and bringing things, long since decreed to pass, altho' those Instruments knew nothing of it, is indeed well besitting Him, who is so *Wonderful in Counsel, and Excellent in Working*: To whom be Glory, and Blessing, and Praise, through the endless Ages of Eternity.

Thus the Eternal Father had decreed our Great Redeemer should be born *Bethlehem*: For so the Prophet Micah had declared, saying, *But thou Bethlehem Ephrata, though thou be little among Thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall come forth unto me, who is to be Ruler of Israel, whose Goings forth have been from Old, from Everlasting.* But when time drew near he should be Born,

blesse
her el
nothi
would
phet
long a
this ti
peror,
Empir
in his
scended
men :
and her
Bethlehe
was the
be Tax'd
decreed
must the
Micah pr
his getti
his, thro
ruling it
about the
so impor
the Messia
magnifie
ruling Pro
all Event
Peoples C

Blessed Virgin liv'd at *Nazareth*, with
 her espoused Husband *Joseph*, designing
 nothing else but to lye-in there; which
 could have contradicted what the Pro-
 phet *Micah* by Divine Inspiration had
 long ago foretold : And therefore at
 this time *Augustus Caesar*, the Roman Em-
 peror, puts out a Decree, that all the
 Empire should be Tax'd, and each one
 in his own City from whence he de-
 scended, and that both Men and Wo-
 men : This caus'd the Blessed Virgin,
 and her espoused Husband, to go to
Bethlehem, (big as she was, and far as
 was the way) that they might there
 be Tax'd, according to what *Caesar* had
 decreed ; and there the Lord of Life
 must then be born, according to what
Micah prophesied. *Caesar* aim'd only at
 his getting Money ; and yet that Aim of
 his, through the Divine Wisdom over-
 ruling it, was made a Means to bring
 about the fulfilling of the Prophecy, in
 so important a matter, as the Birth of
 the Messiah. This tends exceedingly to
 magnifie the mighty Wisdom and over-
 ruling Providence of God, who governs
 all Events to his own Glory and his
 Peoples Good.

You

You knew a Person, *Epenetus*, in the World below, who having propos'd to go see a Friend, and stay at his House some Days, fell down as he was getting up on Horseback, and broke his Leg; which put a stop to his intended Journey: This he esteem'd a very great Affliction; but in a few Days after receiv'd Intelligence that his Friend's House was casually burnt that very Night that he intended to have lain there, and all the People in it. This made him look on that which he at first thought to be an Affliction, to be a Mercy to him; and that the breaking of his Leg, was but in order to the saving of his Life. Many such Instances of Divine Love and Goodness might be given, which here the Blessed retain a lively Sense of, and mention in their Songs of Praise and Hallelujahs to God and to the Lamb.

Again, my *Epenetus*, Here all the Blessed are Eternally Employ'd in singing Praises to Him, who by his wondrous Grace has brought 'em to his Glory. Here we see plainly that Gulph of Everlasting Ruine, in which we were so like to plunge our selves, had he not stop'd our Way. He often hedg'd up
our

our W
not T
ous m
broug
to one
Chorus
praise
nation
we are
ness, w
Thus
last Qu
underst
cloathes
mean ti
you have
tainmen
the Glor
you have
ect, to m
our self
reat Ap
our self,
lares he
lesh, lest
p too mu
ons that
mple ther
ility wil

our Way with Thorns, that so we might not Travel to Destruction. The various methods of his Grace, whereby he brought us to himself, we here repeat to one another, and join in one great *Chorus* to his Praise: And whilst we praise him thus, he streams forth Emanations of his Grace upon us, whereby we are assimilated more into his Likeness, which is our highest Happiness.

Thus, *Epenetus*, I have answer'd your last Question, which you will better understand, when you shall come to be clothed with Immortality. --- In the mean time, walk worthy of the Grace you have received; and let not your Attainments puff you up, but give to God the Glory of his Grace; and let what you have seen and heard have this effect, to make you so much more abhor your self for your own Vileness. The great Apostle of the Gentiles, who like your self, was once admitted hither, declares he soon met with a *Thorn in the flesh*, lest he should else have been puffed up too much for the abundant Revelations that he had receiv'd: Let his Example therefore keep you humble; Humility will be your best Defence; such

GOD

God exalts, whilst he the Proud depresses. ---- I see your Guardian Angel's coming towards you; and therefore, *Epenetus*, fare-you-well till next you come, and then we'll part no more.

Epen. She had no sooner spoke, but she departed; and the bright Form that brought me from the World below into this Place of Happiness, was present with me: To whom, as I was bowing,

Ang. Bow to the Throne, (said he) and not to me; I have already told you, I am thy fellow Creature; and therefore worship God alone, for he alone is worthy of Adoration.---Hast thou observ'd these Heavenly Mansions well?

Epen. I then reply'd, I have observ'd, and have almost been ravish'd with their Glory; but even here I could but see in part; their Splendor was too Bright and too Diaphanous for my Beholding. And yet the Sight was so extream delightful, that I could wish I might stay here for ever.

Angel. I have, reply'd the Angel, Commission to Re-conduct you to the World below: Not only to the Earth from whence I took you, but to the Regions of the Prince of Darkness, the

thou
and w
as the
who v
Thron
therefo
mission
likewi
leave t
I took t
Mortali
be thy
shalt liv
here.

Epen.
did as i
For ro le
which dic
would ha
out that I
But to lea
which tur
However,
Divine Go
return'd f
and there
re-cond
ttle comfo
If an inti

you may'tt there see the Reward of Sin,
and what incensed Justice has prepar'd,
the just Judgment of their Rebellion,
no would exalt themselves above the
throne of the most High. But do not
therefore be afraid; for as I have a Com-
mission to bring thee thither, so have I
power to bring thee back again, and
save thee in the World from whence
I took thee, till thou hast there put off
Mortality; and then I shall once more
conduct thee hither, where thou
 shalt live for ever with all the Blessed
there.

Epen. These last Words of the Angel
did as it were put new Life into me:
For *to leave Heaven for Earth*, was that
which did extreamly discompose me, and
would have render'd me unconsolable,
but that I knew the *Divine Will* was such.
But *to leave Heaven for Hell*, was that
which turn'd my very Heart within me.
However, when I knew that it was the
Divine Good Pleasure that I should be
return'd from thence to Earth again,
and there put off Mortality, and then
be re-conducted up to Heaven, I was a
little comforted, and found within my
self an intire Resignation to the Will of
F God;

GOD; and therefore said with some Assurance to my bright Conductor, That which the blessed God has order'd, I shall be always willing to obey, of whose great Mercy I have already had so very large Experience,

*That even in Hell it self I will not fear,
May I but have his Presence with me there.*

Ang. To this my shining Guardian answer'd me, Where-ever the blessed God vouchsafes his Presence, there is Heaven, and whilst we are in Hell, he will be with us.

Epen. Then bowing low before th' Almighty's Throne, swifter than Thought my Guardian Angel carry'd me Ten Thousand Leagues below the Imperial Heavens, where when I saw those mighty Globes of Fires, whose Ever-burning Lamps of the Æthereal Heavens, I thus bespoke my bright Conductor; That I had heard, when I was upon Earth, that each one of those fixed Stars were Worlds; and I believ'd they might; because, though here they are of such a mighty Magnitude, they seem to us on Earth just such small things as what the Earth seems here; although indeed the Earth seems here more dark, than they

they do unto those that are on Earth. But having such an opportunity, I would willingly be inform'd from you what Truth there is therein.

Angel. To this my shining Guardian answer'd me, To Him who is Almighty, there's nothing impossible; nor can there be a Bound set to Infinity. The Ever-blessed God took six Days time to make the World below, but could as well have made it in one Moment, if he had so determin'd; it was the putting forth of his Almighty Power that did effect it: And what that Power can do, there's none can tell, but he that does possess it. But from his Power, to argue, 'tis his Will, is no good Logick in the School of Heaven. He does whatever he pleases, both in Heaven above, and in the Earth below; and what he pleases to reveal to us, we know; and what he has not so reveal'd, are Secrets lock'd up in his own Eternal Counsel, which 'tis a bold and a presumptuous Curiosity for any Creature to enquire into. There is no doubt but he can make as many Worlds as there are Stars in Heaven, if it pleases Him; that that he has done so, he has not yet

F 2

reveal'd,

reveal'd, nor is it therefore our Duty to enquire.

By this time we were come down to the lowest Regions of the Air, where I saw Multitudes of horrid Forms, and dismal dark Appearances, fly from the Shining Presence of my Bright Conductor.

Epen. These sure, said I, are some of the Vanguard of Hell, so black and so affrighting are their Forms.

Angel. These are, said my Conductor, some of the Apostate Spirits, that wander up and down in th' Air, and on the Earth, like Roaring Lions, seeking whom they may devour: And though they are fled hence, you'll see 'em quickly in their own dark Territories; for we are now upon the Borders of the Infernal Pit.

Vision

you
not
for
Thro
Here
Damm
endles
mind
swer y

Visions of Hell:

AND OF

The Torments of the Damned.

I Quickly found the Words of my Conductor very true, for we were soon furrounded with a Darknefs much more Black than Night, which was attended with a Stink more Suffocating far than that of Burning Brimstone; my Ears were likewise filled with the horrid Yellings of the Damned Spirits, that all the most Discordant Notes on Earth were, in comparifon of this, melodious Mufick.

Ang. Now, faid my Guardian Angel, you are on the Verge of Hell: But do not fear the Power of the Destroyer, for my Commiffion from the Imperial Throne fecures you from all Dangers; Here you may hear from Devils and Damned Souls the curfed Caufes of their endless Ruine. And what you have a mind to ask, Enquire, and they fhall answer you. The Devils cannot hurt you,

tho' they would, for they are bound by Him that has commission'd me, of which themselves are sensible, which makes them rage, and fret, and roar, and bite their hated Chain, but all in vain.

We now were come within Hells Territories, plac'd in the Caverns of the Infernal Deep; there, where Earths Center reconciles all things, where all Effects do in their Causes sleep: There, in a Sulphurous Lake of Liquid Fire, bound with the Adamantine Chain of Heavens fixed Decree, Sat *Lucifer* upon a Burning Throne; his horrid Eyes sparkling with Hellish Fury, as full of Rage as his strong Pains could make him.—— Those wandering Fiends, that, as we came from Heaven, fled before us, had (I perceive) given Notice of our Coming, which put all Hell in an Uproar, and thus made *Lucifer* to vent his horrid Blasphemies against the Blessed God; which he deliver'd with such an Air of Arrogance and Pride, as plainly shews, he only wanted Power, but neither Rage nor Malice.

Lucifer. What would the Thunderer have, said he? He has my Heaven already, whose radiant Sceptre this bold

Hand

Hand should bear: And for those never-fading Fields of Light, my fair Inheritance, confines me here, in this dark House of Death, Sorrow and Wo! What would he have Hell from me too, that he insults me here? Ah! could I but obtain another Day to try it in, I'd make Heaven shake, and his bright Throne to totter. Nor would I fear the utmost of his Power, tho' he had fiercer Flames than these to throw me in. Tho' then I lost the Day, the fault won't mine: No winged Spirit in Heavens Arched Roof bid fairer for the Victory than I did. --- But Ah! (continued he, with a changed Voice) that Day is lost; and I am doom'd, for ever doom'd to these dark Territories! ----- But 'tis at least some comfort to me still, that Mankind's Sorrow waits upon my Wo. And since I cannot on the Thunderer, I'll wreak the utmost of my Rage on them.

Epen. I was amaz'd to hear his Impious Speech, and could not forbear saying to my Conductor, How justly are his Blasphemies rewarded?

Ang. What you have heard from this Apostate Spirit, is both his Sin and Punishment; for every Blasphemy he

Belches against Heaven, makes Hell the hotter to him.

We then pass'd on further, amongst dismal Scenes of unmix'd Sorrow, and saw two wretched Souls tormented by a Fiend, who without ceasing plung'd 'em in Liquid Fire and Burning Brimstone, whilst they at the same time accused and cursed each other : One of them saying to his tormented fellow-Sufferer, O cursed be thy Face, that ever I set Eyes upon thee ! My Misery is long of thee ; I may thank thee for this ; for it was thy Perswasions brought me hither : Thou didst intice me, thou it was that didst insnare me thus. It was your Covetousness, and Cheating, and your Oppression, and Grinding of the Poor, that brought me hither : If you had but set me a good Example, as you did an ill one, I might, for ought I know, have been in Heaven, and there have been as happy as I am now miserable : But O Wretch that I was ! my following your Steps has made me in this wretched State, and ruin'd me for ever : O that I had never seen thy Face, or thou hadst never been born, to do my Soul that Wrong that you have done.

The

The other Wretch reply'd, And may
I not as well blame you? For do you
not remember how at such a time and
place you did entice me, and drew me
out, and asked me if I would not go a-
long with you, when I was about other
Business, about my lawful Calling? But
you called me away; and therefore are
as much in fault as I: Though I was
Covetous, yet you were Proud; and if
you learn'd of me your Covetousness,
I am sure I learn'd of you my Pride and
Drunkenness; and though you learn'd
of me to Cheat, yet you learn'd me to
Whore, to Lye, and Scoff at Goodness.
Thus, though I stumbled you in some
things, you stumbled me as much in
others; and therefore if you blame me,
I can blame you as much: And if I have
to answer for some of your most filthy
Actions, you have still to answer for
some of mine. I wish you never had
come hither; the very Looks of you do
wound my Soul, by bringing Sin afresh
into my Mind: It was with you, with
you it was, I sinn'd; O Grief unto my
Soul! And since I could not shun thy
company there, O that I could have
been without it here!

F 5

From

From this sad Dialogue, I soon perceiv'd, that those who are Companions upon Earth in Sin, shall be so too in Hell in Punishment. And though on Earth they love each others Company, they will not care for it in Hell. This, I believe, was the true Reason why *Dives* seemed so Charitable to his Brethren, that he would have them warned, that so they might not come into this place of Torment; 'twas Love unto himself, and not to them, that was his motive; because had they come thither, his Torments would have thereby been increased.

But there were yet more Tragick Scenes of Sorrow; for leaving those two cursed Wretches accusing of each other, for being Authors of each others Misery, we pass on further, beholding several wofull Spectacles; and among others, one who still had flaming Sulphur forced down her Throat by a tormenting Spirit; which he did with that horrid Cruelty and Insolence, I could not but say to him,

Epen. Why should you so delight in the Tormenting of that cursed Wretch, as to be thus perpetually pouring that Flaming and Infernal Liquor down her Throat?

Fiend. This is no more, but a just Re-tribution, replied the *Fiend*: This *W*oman in her Life-time was such a fordid Wretch, that though she had Gold enough; could never be satisfied; and therefore now I pour it down her Throat: She cared not who she ruined and undid, so she could get their Gold; and when she had amass'd together a greater Treasure than ever she could spend, her Love of Money would not let her spend so much of it, as to supply her self with what the common Necessities of Life required. For she then went often with an empty Belly, though her Bags were full, or else she filled it at anothers Charge: And as for her Apparel, it either never grew Old, or if it were so, it was always so supplied with Patches, that at last it was as hard to say which piece was an Original, as it is among the Learned Men on Earth to find out the Original of *Nile*. She kept no House, because she would not be Taxed; nor kept her Treasure in her Hands, for fear she should be Robbed; nor let it out without good Bonds and Mortgages, for fear of being Cheated; although she ever Cheated all she could,
and

and was her self so great a Cheat, she Cheated her own Body of its Food, and her own Soul of Mercy. And yet this cursed Wretch had but one Child in all the World to give it to, whom she had brought up so, she knew no more how to make use on't than her Mother did.--- Since Gold then was her God on Earth, is it not just that she should have her Belly-full in Hell?

Epen. When her Tormentor had done speaking, I asked her whether what he said were true or not? — To this, she answered me, No; to my Grief it is not. How! to your Grief, said I? Yes, to my Grief, said she: Because, *were that which my Tormentor tells you, true, I should be better satisfied*; he tells you, that it is Gold that he pours down my Throat; but he is a Lying Devil, and speaks falsely: Were it but Gold, I never should complain; but he abuses me, and in the stead of Gold, he only gives me horrid stinking Sulphur: Had I my Gold, I should be happy still; which I so truly Value, that if I had it here, I scarce would bribe Heaven with it, to be removed from hence.

I could

I could not forbear telling my Conductor, I was amaz'd to hear a Wretch, in Hell it self, so doat upon her Riches, and that too whilst in the Tormentors Hands.

Ang. This may (said he) convince ye, 'Tis Sin that is the greatest of all Evils; and where the Love of that prevails, that Soul is lost for ever. And therefore 'tis the greatest of all Punishments to be abandon'd to the Love of Sin. The Love of Gold, (to which this cursed Creature is given up) is a more exquisite and fatal Punishment, than that which the Apostate Spirits here inflict upon her.

Epen. Oh! said I, could but wicked Men on Earth, for one small moment lay their Ears to this Mouth of *Tophet*, and hear those horrid Shrieks of Damned Souls, they could not be in love with Sin again.

Ang. Eternal Truth has told us otherwise: For those that will not fear his Ministers, nor have regard to what his Word contains, will not be warn'd, tho' one should come from Hell.

We had not come much further, before we saw a wretched Soul lie on a
Bed

Bed of Burning Steel, almost choak'd with Brimstone: Who cried out, as one under a dreadful Anguish with a Note of Description; which made me to desire of my Conductor to stay a while, that I might listen more attentively to what he said; and thereupon I heard him speak as follows:

Ah, miserable Wretch! Undone for Ever, for Ever! O those killing Words, *For Ever!* will not a thousand Thousand Years suffice, to bear that Pain, which if I could avoid it, I would not bear one moment for a thousand Thousand Worlds: No, no, my Misery never will have an End: After The thousand Thousand Years, 'twill be *For Ever* still. O hapless, helpless, hopeless State indeed! 'Tis this *For Ever* is the Hell of Hell! O cursed Wretch! Cursed to all Eternity! How wilfully have I undone my self! O what stupendious Folly am I guilty of, to choose Sin's short and momentary Pleasures, at the dear Rate of everlasting Pain! How oft have I been told it would be so! How often press'd to leave those Paths of Sin that would be sure to bring me to the Chambers of Eternal Death! But I, like the
deaf

deaf Adder, lent no Ear unto those Charmers, tho they charm'd so wisely. They told me often, that my short-liv'd Pleasures would quickly issue in Eternal Pain; and now too sad Experience tells me so: It tells me so indeed, but 'tis too late to help it; for my Eternal State is fix'd forever. Why had I Reason given me! Why was I made with an Immortal Soul, and yet should take so little Care of it! O how my own Neglect stings me to Death, and yet I know I cannot, must not die! But live a dying Life, worse than ten thousand Deaths; and yet I might once have help'd all this, and would not! O that's the Gnawing Worm that never dies! I might have once been happy; Salvation once was offer'd me, and I refused it: Ah! had it been but once, yet to refuse it, had been a Folly not to be forgiven; but it was offer'd me a thousand times, and yet (Wretch that I was) I still as oft refused it. O cursed Sin, that with deluding Pleasures bewitches Mankind to Eternal Ruine! God often called, but I as oft refused; He stretched his Hand out, but I would not mind it: How often

often have I set at nought his Counsel!
 How oft have I refused his Reproof!
 But now the Scene is chang'd, the Case
 is alter'd: For now he laughs at my
 Calamity, and mocks at that Destruction
 which is come upon me. He would
 have help'd me once, but then I would
 not; and therefore those Eternal Miser-
 ies I am condemn'd to undergo, is but
 the just Reward of my own Doing.

I could not hear this doleful Lamen-
 tation, without reflecting on the won-
 drous Grace the Ever-blessed God had
 shewed to me: Eternal Praises to his
 holy Name! For my Heart told me,
 that I had deserved, as much as that sad
 Wretch, to be the Object of Eternal
 Wrath; and it is his Grace alone has
 made us differ!

O how unsearchable his Counsels be!

And who can fathom his divine Decree!

After these Reflections, I address'd my
 self to the doleful Complainer, and told
 him, I had heard his woful Lamentati-
 on, by which I perceiv'd his Misery was
 great, and his Loss irreparable; and
 told him, I would willingly be inform'd
 of it more particularly: Which might
 possibly be some Alleviation of his Suf-
 ferings.

Dam. Vo.

Dam. Soul. No, not at all, My Pains are such as can admit of no Relief, no not for one small moment. But by the Question you have asked, I do perceive you are a Stranger here; and may you ever be so. Ah! had I but the least Hopes still remaining, how would I kneel, and cry, and pray for ever, to be redeemed from hence! But ah, 'tis all in vain; I am lost for ever. ———

Though, that you may beware of coming hither, I'll tell you what the Damned suffer here.

Our Miseries in this Infernal Dungeon are of two sorts; what we have lost, and what we undergo: And these I will reduce each to their several Head; altho' the sad Relation will give a greater Sting to what I feel.

First then, For what we have lost.

1. In this sad dark Abode of Misery and Sorrow, we have lost the Presence of the Ever-blessed God: And this is that which makes this Dungeon, Hell. Tho' we had lost a thousand Worlds, it would not be so much as this one loss: Could but the least Glimpse of his Favour enter here, we might be happy; but we have lost it, to our everlasting No.

2. Here

2. Here we have likewise lost the Company of Saints and Angels, and in their Room have nothing but Tormenting Devils.

3. Here we have lost Heaven too, the Seat of Blessedness: There is a deep Gulph betwixt us and Heaven; so that we are shut out from thence for ever. Those Everlasting Gates, that let the Blessed into Happiness, are now for ever shut against us here.

4. Here we have also lost all Pity; and this is to the Miserable a great Loss: To have that God, who does so pity Sinners, that he has given his Beloved Son to die for 'em, to be so far from pitying us, that he rejoices in our Misery, and will do so for ever, is that which stings us to the very Heart, and makes our Misery beyond measure miserable. And what can be more Cruel and Tormenting, than to have that Redeemer, that gave his very Blood for others, deny to pity us? Nor will the Saints and Angels pity us; but whilst we here are howling in our Misery, under the Wrath of an Incensed God, the Saints too shall rejoyce that we are Damn'd, and God is glorified in our Destruction.

Destruction. Behold the dismal Issue of our Sin !

5. To make our Wretchedness yet far more Wretched, we have lost the Hope of ever being in a better State : Which renders our Condition truly Hopeless. He that upon Earth is the most miserable, has yet Hope left as a Reserve. And therefore 'tis a common Proverb there, *That were it not for Hope, the Heart would break.* Well may our Hearts break then, since we are here both without Hope and Help.

This is what we have lost ; which but to think on, is enough to tear, and rend, and gnaw upon our miserable Souls for ever. Yet, O that this were all ! But we have Pain of Sense, as well as Loss : And having shew'd you what we have lost, I am now to shew you what we undergo.

1. And first, We undergo Variety of Torments : We are tormented here, a thousand, nay ten thousand several ways. They that are most afflicted upon Earth, have seldom any more than one Distemper at a time : But should they have the Plague, the Gout, the Stone, and Feaver at a time, how miserable

ferable would they think themselves? Yet all those are but like the Biting of a Flea, to those intollerable Pungent Pains that we endure: Here we have all the loath'd Variety of Hell to grapple with: Here's Fire that is unquenchable to Burn us with; a Lake of Burning Brimstone ever choaking us; Eternal Chains to tye us; Here's utter Darkness to affright us, and a Worm of Conscience that gnaws upon us everlastingly: And any one of these is worse to bear, than all the Torments Mankind ever felt on Earth.

2. But as our Torments here are Various, so are they Universal too; afflicting each Part of the Body, and tormenting all the Powers of the Soul: Which renders what we suffer most unsufferable. In those Distempers you Men are seiz'd withal on Earth, tho' some Parts are afflicted, other Parts are free: Although your Body may be out of order, your Head may yet be well; and though your Head be ill, your Vitals may be free; or though your Vitals be affected, your Arms and Legs may still be clear. But here 'tis otherwise; each Member of the Soul and Body is at once tormented

mented. --- The Eye is here tormented with the sight of Devils, who do appear in all the horrid Shapes and black Appearances that Sin can give 'em. --- The Ear is continually tormented with the loud Yellings and continual Outcries of the Damned. --- The Nostrils smother'd with Sulphurous Flames; --- The Tongue with Burning Blisters, and the whole Body roll'd in Flames of Liquid Fire; --- and all the Powers and Faculties of our Souls are, here tormented: --- The Imagination, with the Thoughts of present Pain; the Memory, with reflecting on what a Heaven we have lost, and of those Opportunities we had of being saved: --- Our Minds are here tormented with considering how vainly we have spent our Precious Time, and how we have abused it: --- Our Understanding is tormented in the Thoughts of our past Pleasures, present Pains, and future Sorrows, which are to last for ever: --- And our Consciences are tormented with a continual gnawing Worm.

3. Another thing that makes our Misery insupportable, is the Extremity of our Torments: The Fire that burns us

is

is so violent, that all the Water in the Sea can never quench it : The Pains we suffer here are so extream, that 'tis impossible they should be known by any one but those that feel 'em. Vindictive Justice here displays its Power, in the sustaining of our dying Lives under those great and cruciating Pains, which scarce an Angel's Strength could undergo.

4. Another of the sad Ingredients of our Misery, is the Continuity of our Torments: As Various, and as Universal, and as extream Violent as they are, they are Continual too; nor have we the least Intermission from them; our Miseries are both extream, and always so. If there were any Relaxation, it might be some Allay: But this makes our Condition so deplorable, that there's no Intermission of our Torments; but what we suffer now, we must for ever suffer. This causes a Hatred to arise in our Hearts against God; and our Hatred against God continues our Miseries upon us.

5. The Society or Company we have here, is another Ingredient in our Misery: Tormenting Devils and Tormented Souls

Souls are all our Company; and dreadful Shrieks and Howlings, under the Fierceness of our Pain, and fearful Execrations against him whose Power and Justice keeps us here, is all our Conversation. And here the Torments of our Fellow-Sufferers are so far from mitigating our Misery, that they increase our Pain.

6. The Place in which we suffer, is another thing that increases our Sufferings: It is the Abstract of all Misery, a Prison, a Dungeon, a Bottomless Pit, a Lake of Fire and Brimstone, a Furnace of Fire that burns to Eternity, the Blackness of Darkness for ever: And lastly, Hell it self. And such a wretched Place as this, must needs increase our Wretchedness.

7. The Cruelty of our Tormentors, is another thing that adds to our Torments. Our Tormentors are Devils, in whom there is no Pity: But being tormented themselves, do yet take pleasure in Tormenting us.

8. All those Particulars, that I have reckon'd up, are very grievous; but that which makes 'em much more grievous is, That they shall ever be so; that all

all our most intollerable Sufferings shall last to all Eternity: O wretched State of Men! To be the everlasting Objects of God's Revenging Justice: *Depart from me, ye Cursed, into everlasting Fire*, is that which is perpetually Sounding in my Ears. O that I could Reverse that fatal Sentence! O that there was but a bare Possibility of doing it! What is it that I would not do or suffer to effect it? And yet Almighty Power can inflict no more than what I suffer now. But that I shall for ever suffer it, is what I know not how to bear; and yet what I must ever undergo. Thus have I shew'd you the miserable Case that we are in, and shall be in for ever.

This wretched Soul had scarcely made an end of what he was a saying, before he was afresh tormented by a Hellish Fury, who bid him cease Complaining, for it was in vain: Besides, said he, Do you not know, you have deserved it all! How often were you told of this before but would not then believe it? You laugh'd at them that told you of a Hell nay, you were so Presumptuous, to dare Almighty Justice to destroy you. How often have you call'd on God to damn you

you? And do you now complain that you are answer'd according to your Wishes? What an unreasonable thing is this, that you should call so often for Damnation, and yet be so uneasie under it? You own your self, you had Salvation offer'd you, and you refused it: With what Face then can you complain of being Damn'd? I have more Reason to complain than you, for you have had a long time of Repentance given you, but I was turn'd to Hell as soon as I had sinn'd: You had Salvation offer'd you, and Pardon and Forgiveness often tender'd you; but I never had any Mercy offer'd me; but was consign'd, as soon as I had sinn'd, to everlasting Punishment: If I had had the offer of Salvation, I never would have slighted it as you have done: And it had been better for you, that you had never had the offer of it neither, for then Damnation had been easier to you. Who do you think should pity you, that would be Damn'd in spite of Heaven and self?

This made the Wretch cry out, O do not thus continue to torment me! I know that my Destruction is of my self:

G

O that

O that I could forget it! The Thoughts of that is here my greatest Plague: I wou'd be Damn'd, and therefore justly am so.

Then turning to the *Fiend* that tor-
tur'd him, he said, But 'twas through
thy Temptations, cursed Devil: 'Twas
thou that temptedst me to all the Sins
I have been guilty of; and do'st thou
now upbraid me? You say, you never
had a Saviour offer'd you; but you
should call to mind, you never had a
Tempter neither, as I have had conti-
nually of thee, from whose importunate
Solicitations I never could be free.

To this the Devil scornfully reply'd,
I own it was my Business to decoy you
hither; and you have oft been told so
by your Preachers: They told you plain
enough we sought your Ruine, and went
about continually like Roaring Lions
seeking whom we could devour; and
was oft afraid you would believe 'em, as
several did, to our great Disappoint-
ment: But you were willing to do what
we'd have you; and since you've done
our Work, it is but reasonable that we
shou'd pay your Wages. --- And then
the *Fiend* tormented him afresh, which
caus

caus'd him to roar out so horridly, I could no longer stay to hear him, and so past away.

Epen. How dismal, said I then to my Conductor, is the Condition of these Damned Souls? They are the Devil's Slaves while upon Earth, and he upbraids, and then torments them for it, when they come to Hell.

Angel. Their Malice against all the Race of *Adam*, said my Conductor, is exceeding great, because the Blessed Redeemer dy'd to save 'em, and they enjoy that Happiness from which those Spirits were cast down. And tho' it is impossible they should prevail upon the Elect, so as to make one perish, yet since they know not who they are, they cease not to tempt all to Sin, by all the means they can; as knowing that's the way to make 'em miserable: And because many Souls are ignorant of their Devices, they easily prevail upon them to their eternal Ruine. And how they treat them here, for listening to their Temptations, you have seen already, and will see more on't quickly. And though they do it to satisfy the Rage they have against them, as they are Men, yet are they

they therein the Almighty's Agents, and the just Executioners of his deserved Vengeance against Sinners, who wilfully destroy themselves, by listening to the Devil.

Passing a little further, we saw a multitude of damned Souls together, gnashing their Teeth with extream Rage and Pain, whilst the Tormenting Fiends, with Hellish Fury pour'd Liquid Fire and Brimstone continually upon them: They in the mean time cursing God, themselves, and those about them, in blaspheming after a tremendous manner.

I could not forbear asking of one Fiend that so tormented them, What they were that he used so Cruelly. Said he,

Fiend. They are those that very well deserve it: These are those cursed Wretches, that would teach others the right Road to Heaven; whilst yet themselves were so in Love with Hell, that they came hither: These are those Souls that have been the great Factors of Hell upon the Earth, and therefore do deserve a particular Regard in Hell. Not but use our utmost diligence to give every one their share of Torments, but will

sure to take care these shan't want; for these ha'nt only their own Sins to answer for, but all those too, whom they have led astray, both by their Doctrine and Example.

Epen. Since they have been such great Factors for Hell, as you say, methinks Gratitude should oblige you to use 'em a little more kindly.

Fiend. To this, the Impudent Fiend answered me in a Scoffing manner, They that expect Gratitude among Devils will find themselves mistaken: Gratitude is a Vertue, but we hate all Vertue, and profess an immortal Enmity against it. Besides, we hate all Learning, and were it in our Power, not one of 'em should be happy. 'Tis true, we do'nt tell 'em so upon Earth, because there it is our Business to flatter and delude 'em; but when we have 'em here, where they are fast enough, (for *from Hell there's no Redemption*) we soon convince them of their Folly in believing us.

Epen. From the Discourse I had heard of this and other of the Devils, I could not but reflect, That it is infinite and unspeakable Grace, by which any poor sinners are brought to Heaven; con-

sidering how many Snares and Baits are laid by the Enemy of Souls to intrap them by the way; and therefore it is a Work well worthy of the blessed Son of God, to save his People from their Sins, and to deliver them from the Wrath to come. But it is an unaccountable Mad-ness and Folly in Men to refuse the Of-fers of this Grace, and to close in with the Destroyer.

Angel. 'Tis Sin that thus hardens their Hearts, and blinds their Eyes, so that they are incapable of making a right Judgment of Things, until the holy Spirit comes and anoints their Eyes with his Eye-Salve, which makes the Scales of Ignorance and Error to drop off, whereby they come to see things in a truer Light.

Epen. Going further on, I heard a Wretch complaining in a Heart-break-ing strain against those Men that had betray'd him hither.

Damn. Soul. I was told, said he, by those that I depended on, and thought could have inform'd me right, That if I said but *Lord have Mercy on me*, when I came to die, it would be enough to save me: But O how wretchedly I find

my

my self mistaken, to my Eternal Sor-
row ! Alas, I call'd for Mercy on my
Death-bed, but found it was too late :
This cursed Devil here, that told me
just before, that I was safe enough, then
told me 'twas too late, and Hell must be
my Portion, as I find it is.

Devil. You see I told you true at last ;
and then you wou'd'nt believe me : A
very pretty Business ! e'nt it, think you ?
You spend your Days in the pursuit of
Sin, and wallow in your Filthiness, and
yet you would go to Heaven when you
die ! Would any but a Mad Man think
that that would ever do ? No, he that
in good earnest does intend to go to
Heaven when he dies, must walk in the
Ways of Holiness and Vertue while he
lives. You say some of your lewd Com-
panions told you, That saying, *Lord*
have Mercy on you, when you came to
die, would be enough : A very fine Ex-
cuse ! You might have known, if you'd
have given your self but leisure to have
read the Bible, That *without Holiness*,
there's none shall see the Lord ! Therefore
this is the Sum of the Matter, you were
willing to live in your Sins as long as
you could : You did not leave 'em at
G 4 last

last because you did not like 'em, but because you could follow 'em no longer: And this you know to be true. And could you have the Impudence to think to go to Heaven with the Love of Sin in your Heart? No, no; no such matter: You have been warn'd often enough, that you should take heed of being deceived, for God would not be mocked, but such as you sow'd, you should also reap: So that you have no reason to complain of any thing but your own Folly, which now you see too late.

Epen. This Lecture of the Devil was a very cutting one to the Poor Tormented Wretch, said I to my Conductor, and contains the true case of many now on Earth, as well as those in Hell. But O what a far different Judgment do they make in this sad State, from what they did on Earth!

Angel. The reason of that is, reply'd my Guardian Angel, because they won't allow themselves to think what the Effects of Sin will be, nor what an Evil 'tis, whilst upon Earth: 'Tis Inconsideration is the Ruine of so many Thousands, who think not what they are doing.

doing, nor whither they are going, till 'tis too late to help it.

We had not gone much further, before we heard another tormenting of himself, and aggravating his own Misery, by reflecting on the Happiness of Blessed Souls.

Dam. Soul. How brightly, said he, do the Saints in Heaven shine in the Glory of the Divine Image, whilst I am deformed! And yet I was once as capable of that Glory as they; had the same Nature with them, the same Reason, the same Intellectual Faculties and Powers; But, O what a Prodigious Monster am I now become! That I should hate, and hate Eternally, the Eternal Excellency: Now Sin and Death are finished upon me: And O how vast is the Difference between us! They have the Humane Nature in its most Exalted Beauty and Perfection; but I, accursed I, have the same Nature in its utmost Turpitude and Depravation: Which renders the Comparison unspeakably far more unequal, than that would be of the most amiable lovely Person, flourishing in all the Gayety and Prime of Youthful strength and Beauty; with a putrified

154 *The World to Come: Or,*
and rotten Carcase, deform'd by the
Corruption of a loathsome Grave: Ah,
whence is this amazing difference, but
through my wilful and accursed Sin?
'Tis Sin, 'tis only Sin, that has undone
me, and brought me here to suffer, as
the just Reward thereof, the dreadful
Vengeance of Eternal Fire.

Epen. We were diverted from giving
any further Ear unto these stinging Self-
Reflections of this poor lost Creature,
by seeing a vast Number of Tormenting
Fiends lashing incessantly a numerous
Company of wretched Souls with knot-
ted Whips of ever-burning Steel; whilst
they roar'd out with Cries so very
piercing, and so lamentable, I thought
it might have melted even Cruelty it
self into some pity. ----- Which made
me say to one of the Tormentors, O
stay your Hand, and do not use such
Cruelty as this, to them that are your
fellow-Creatures, and whom perhaps
you have your selves betray'd to all this
Misery.

Devil. No, (answer'd the Tormen-
tor, very smoothly) though we are bad
enough, no Devil ever was so bad as
they, nor guilty of such Crimes as they
have

have been: For we all know there is a God, although we hate him; but these are such as never cou'd be brought to own (till they came hither) that there was such a Being——

Epen. Then these, said I, are Atheists: A wretched sort of Men indeed; and who had once like to have ruin'd me, had not Eternal Grace prevented it.--- I had no sooner spoke, but one of the tormented Wretches cries out with a sad mournful Accent,

Dam. Soul. Sure I should know that Voice: It must be *Epenetus*.---

I was amazed to hear my Name mention'd by one of the Infernal Crew; and therefore being desirous to know who it was, I answered, Yes, I am, *Epenetus*; but who are you, in that sad lost Condition, that knows me?

Dam. Soul. To this, the lost Unknown replied, I was once well acquainted with you upon Earth, and had almost persuaded you to be of my Opinion; I am the Author of that Celebrated Book, for well known by the Title of *Leviathan*.

Epen. What, the Great *Hobbs*, said I? Are you come hither? Your Voice is so much changed, I did not know it.

Hobbs.

Hobbs. Alas, replied he, I am that unhappy Man indeed: But am so far from being Great, that I am one of the most Wretched Persons in all these footy Territories. Nor is it any Wonder that my Voice is chang'd; for I am now chang'd in my Principles, tho' chang'd too late to do me any good: For now I know there is a God: But O! I wish there were not; for I am sure he'll have no Mercy on me: Nor is there any Reason that he should: I do confess, I was his Foe on Earth, and now he is mine in Hell; where he makes me to suffer all that Almighty Power can inflict, or that a Creature is able to sustain. I feel, I feel, to my Eternal Wo, that I am now the Subject of that Power I once so wickedly derided: And it is that wretched Confidence I had in my own Wisdom, that has thus betrayed me.

Epen. Your Case indeed is miserable; and yet you needs must own you suffer justly. For how industrious were you to make Profelytes of others, and so involve them in the same Damnation? None has more Reason to know this, than I; who had almost been
taken

taken in the Snare, and perish'd irrecoverably.

Hobbs. 'Tis that, says he, that stings me to the Heart, to think how many perish by my means: I was afraid, when first I heard your Voice, that you had likewise been consign'd to Punishment. Not that I can wish any Person happy, for 'tis my Plague to think that any are so, whilst I am miserable; but because every Soul that is brought hither, thro' my Seduction, whilst I was on Earth, doubles my Pains in Hell.

Epen. But tell me; for I fain would be inform'd, and you can do it: Did you indeed believe, when upon Earth, there was no God? Could you imagine that the World could make it self? And that the Creatures were the causes of their own Production? Had you no secret Whispers in your Soul, that told you, 'twas another made you, and not you your self? And had you never any Doubts about this matter? I have often heard it said, when upon Earth, Tho' there are many that profess there is no God, there is not one that thinks so: And it would be strange there should, because there is none but carries

ries in their Bosom a Witness for that God whom they deny. Now you can tell whether it is so or no; and you have now no Reason to conceal your Sentiments.

Hobbs. Nor will I, *Epenetus*, answered he; altho' the Thoughts thereof stings me afresh. I did at first believe there was a God, who was that Sovereign Self-subsisting Power, that gave a Being to all other Creatures: But falling afterwards to vicious Courses, which render'd me obnoxious to his Wrath, I had some secret Wishes there was none; for 'tis impossible to think there is a God, and not withal to think him Just and Righteous, and consequently that he is obliged to punish the Transgressors of his Law: And being I was Conscious to my self, I lay obnoxious to his Justice, it made me hate him, and wish that there was no such Being: But still pursuing the same vicious Courses, and finding Justice did not overtake me, I then began to hope there was no God; and from those Hopes, began to frame in my own Breast, Ideas suitable to what I hoped: And having thus in my own Thoughts fram'd a New System of
the

the World's Original, excluding thence the Being of a Deity, I found my self so fond of those new Notions, that I at last prevail'd upon my self to give 'em Credit, and then endeavour'd to fasten the Belief of 'em on others. But e're I came to such a heighth as this, I do acknowledge that I found several Checks in my own Conscience for what I did, and all along should now and then be troubled with some strange uneasie Thoughts, as if I should not find all right at last; which I endeavour'd to put off, as much as in me lay. And now I find those checking Thoughts, that might have been of Service to me then, are here the things that most of all torments me. And I must own, the Love of Sin harden'd my Heart against my Maker, and made me hate him first, and then deny his Being. Sin, that I hugg'd so close within my Bosom, has been the curst Cause of all this Woe; the Serpent that has stung my Soul to Death. For now I find maugre my vain Philosophy, and those new Systems endeavour'd to obtrude upon the World, *There is G O D, and that a Great and Terrible One.* I find too now, that
God

God will not be mocked, although it was my daily Practice in the World, to mock at Heaven, and ridicule whatever things are Sacred; which were the means I used to spread abroad my cursed Notions, and which I always found very successful: For those I could but get to ridicule the Sacred Oracles, I always look'd upon to be in a fair way to become my Disciples. But now the Thoughts thereof are more tormenting to me, than all the Torments I sustain by Whips of Burning Steel. For nothing more provokes the offended Majesty of Heaven, than thus to ridicule what he has made so Awful.

Epen. By that which you have said, 'tis easie to discern the great Malignity of Sin against the Ever-blessed God; from whose most righteous Will and Law, it is a Deviation. And 'twas alone your giving way to Sin, that entail'd all your Miseries upon you; and, doubtless, 'tis a cruel and tormenting Thought to think, that what you suffer is most justly. But 'tis not my design to aggravate your Miseries, only I'd ask another Question that I'd be resolv'd:

I heard

I heard your self and others in the same Condition with you, cry out of Burning Steel, and Fire, and Flames, and yet I cannot discern it: Where there is Fire, there must be some degree of Light; and yet for ought appears to me, you are still in utter Darknes.

Hobbs. O that I could but say, I felt no Fire! How easie would my Torments be, to that which now I find'em! But out alas, the Fire that we endure, ten thousand times exceeds all culinary Fire in Fierceness; and is of a quite different Nature from it: Which you already well observed in one particular, which is, that there is no Light at all attends it, as does upon such Fire as burns on Earth; but notwithstanding all the Fire in Hell, we are in utter Darknes. But then the Fire you burn on Earth, is of a preying and devouring Nature; for whatsoever it takes hold of, it consumes to Ashes; and when it meets with no more Fewel, it goes out. But here it is not so; for though it burns with that tremendous Fierceness, which none but those that feel it know, yet does it not consume, nor never will: We shall ever be burning,

burning, yet not burned: 'Tis a tormenting, but not consuming Fire. The Fire that is burned on Earth, is a Corporeal Fire, and cannot seize on Immaterial Substances; and such are Souls: But here the Fire seizes upon our Souls, and puts 'em unto Pain so exquisite and so tormenting, as cannot be exprest. It was my Ignorance of this, when upon Earth, that made me ridicule the Notion of Immaterial Substances being burnt by Fire: Which here to my own Cost, I find too true.---- And then another Difference betwixt the Fire that burns us here, and that which burns on Earth, is this, That you can kindle that whenever you please, and quench it when you will: But here 'tis otherwise; this Fire is kindled by the Breath of Heaven, like to a Stream of Brimstone, and it burns for ever; and therefore is most properly stiled, *Fire unquenchable*, which here is like to be our Everlasting Portion. And this is what I have to answer unto the last sad Question that you ask'd me.

Epen. Sad indeed, said I! See what Almighty Power can inflict on those that Violate his Righteous Law! ----

I was

I was a making some further Observations on what I heard, when the relentless Fiend, that was before tormenting of 'em, thus interrupted me :

Devil. You see by him what sort of Men they were, when in the World, and don't you think that they deserve the Punishment they undergo?

Epen. To which I answer'd, Doubtless it is the just Reward of Sin which now they suffer; and which hereafter you shall suffer too: For you, as well as they, have sinn'd against the Ever-blessed God; and for your Sin, shall suffer the just Vengeance of Eternal Fire. Nor is it in the least any Excuse to say, you never doubted the Being of a God; for though you knew there was a God, yet you rebell'd against him; and therefore shall be justly punish'd with Everlasting Destruction from the Presence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his Power.

Devil. To this the Fiend reply'd, 'Tis true, we know we shall be punish'd as thou hast said; but if it be a Reason why Mankind should have Pity shew'd them, because they fell through the Temptations of the Devil; 'tis the same case

case with me, and all the rest of the Inferior Spirits, for we were tempted by the bright Sun of the Morning, to take part with him. And therefore, though this aggravates the Crime of *Lucifer*, it should extenuate that of Inferior Spirits.

Angel. To this my bright Conductor (who had not spoken to them since my coming hither) thus reply'd, with a stern angry Countenance, O thou Apostate wicked lying Spirit! Canst thou affirm those things, and see me here? Dost thou not know, it was thy Proud Heart made thee take part with *Lucifer* against the Blessed God, who had Created thee a Glorious Creature? But priding of thy self in thy own Beauty, thou would'st have been above thy blessed Creator, and so wert ready to take part with *Lucifer*, and justly art with him cast down to Hell; and thy former Comeliness and Beauty chang'd to that horrid monstrous Form, in which thou now appearest, as the just Punishment of thy Rebellious Pride.

Devil. To this the Apostate Spirit only said, Why do'st thou thus invade our Territories, and come here to tor-

ment

ment us, e're our time? And when he had said this, he slunk away, as if he durst not stay to have an Answer.

Epen. The *Fiend* being gone, I said to my Conductor, Something I have already heard about the Fall of the Apostate Angels, but have a great desire to be inform'd in the Particulars thereof more fully.

Angel. To this my Guardian Angel answer'd me, When thou shalt once have put off thy Mortality, and be Translated to the Blessed above, there thou shalt know such things as now thou canst not apprehend. And therefore in thy present State, desire not to be wise above what's written. It is enough to know the Angels sinn'd, and for their Sin were cast down to Hell. But how pure Spirits should have a Thought rise in their Hearts against the Eternal Purity that first Created them, is what thou art not capable of comprehending now. The Angelick Spirits are free Agents all, created so by the Almighty, who loves to have a free and willing Service offer'd him by all his Creatures; and this, the Sacred Oracles informs you, is called a *Reasonable*

able Service; and Angels had a time for their Probation, even in Heaven, as well as *Adam* had in Paradise; and like him, was created in a Possibility of Falling: But as the Fall of *Adam* was repaired by the great Promise of the Blessed *Messiah*; so all those Blessed Spirits, that kept their Station in the great Defection of the Apostate Angels, are, through the wondrous Grace of the *Messiah*, confirmed therein for ever; that he might be the *Head of Angels too, as well as Men*; and have in all things the *Pre-eminence*, as well becomes the Eternal Son of God.----But you have seen enough in these Black Realms of Misery and Wo, to shew the Glory of Eternal Justice, which even the Damned Spirits own to be so. For when that great Deciding Day shall come, in which the Bodies of the Dead shall rise, and be united to their Souls again, and then appear before the Judgment-Seat, there is none of these Black Souls but will plead Guilty, and justify the Judgment of Damnation, that they shall then hear God pronounce against 'em.

Epen. I have observed, said I, that all of them complain most of the Torment

that

that arises from their own Sense of Guilt; which justifies the Justice of the Punishment. --- This gloomy Prison is the best Glass to behold Sin in its most proper Colours: For were there not the greatest Malignity in Sin, it would not be Rewarded with so extream a Punishment.

Angel. Your Inference is very Natural; but there is yet a better Glass than this, to see the just Demerits due to Sin: And that is by Contemplation to behold the Blessed Son of God upon the Cross: There we may see the dire Effects of Sin: There we may see its true Malignity. For all the Sufferings of the Damned here, are but the Sufferings of Creatures still; but on the Cross you see a Suffering God.

Epen. Surely, said I, Justice and Mercy did never so Triumph and Kiss each other, as in that fatal Hour. For Justice here was fully satisfied in the just Punishment of Sin; and Mercy triumph'd, and was pleas'd, because hereby Salvation for poor Sinners was effected. And O Eternal Praises to his holy Name for ever! that by his Grace he has made me willing to accept of this Salvation,

Salvation, and thereby to become an Heir of Glory: For I remember some of those lost Wretches here, have in their bitter Lamentations urg'd, That when Salvation has been offer'd them, they have refused it. It was therefore Grace alone that help'd me to accept it.

My shining Guardian told me here-upon, That he must now conduct me to the Earth again, and leave me there, to wait with Faith and Patience, till my expected happy Change should come. And added likewise, That it would be my Wisdom to retain always such a due Sense of my own Unworthiness, for to be Vile in my own Eyes, would make me precious in the sight of God: And that I should not take that Caution ill, because the Enemy of Souls is readiest with Temptations to puff up those who have had great Discoveries and Revelations of the Mind of God: For there is nothing that the Devil aims at more, than to destroy those who are most dear to God: And though he ever fails in his Attempts, he is unwearied still in his Endeavours; and oftentimes prevails so far against 'em, as to per-

swad

swade 'em to commit those Sins, which makes 'em afterwards go mourning to their Graves.

I gave him Thanks for the good Counsel he had given me, and told him I should be much wanting to my self, if I should not accept it as the greatest Kindness he could shew me. Come then, said he, and let us leave these Realms of Wo and Horror to the Possession of their black Inhabitants.----And in a very little space of Time, I found my self on Earth again, and in that very place where I design'd to have committed that black Sin of being my own Murderer, overcome by the Temptations of the Devil, who had perswaded me there was no God, as is in the beginning of the Book related. --- But what way it was that I came thither, I am not at all able to determine. --- As soon as I was by the Bank that I before had sat on, the bright Appearance, by whom I had been all along conducted, said to me,

Ang. Now *Epenetus*, you know where you are, and I must stay no longer with you now: I have another Ministrations to attend. Praise him that sits upon the Throne

170 *The World to Come: Or,*
Throne for ever, who has all Power in
Heaven, Earth, and Hell,
For all the Wonders of his Love and Grace,
That he has shewn you in so short a space.

Epen. As I was going to reply to
him, my bright Conductor disappear'd,
and I was left alone. And having for
some time consider'd of the Amazing
Visions I had seen, and of the Won-
drous Things that I had heard, I scarce
believ'd I was again on Earth; nor did
I know what time it was I had been
absent. And then resolving to return
to my own Habitation, I first kneel'd
down and pray'd that I might never
lose a lively Sense of all those Won-
drous Things that had been shown me;
and then 'rose up again, blessing and
praising God for all his Goodness, and
much admiring at his Wondrous Grace
and Condescension.

Being return'd unto my House, my
Family were much surpriz'd to see my
Countenance so strangely chang'd; and
look'd upon me as if they scarce had
known me.

I ask'd them what the meaning was
of their unusual Admiration?

Th

They answer'd, 'Twas the alteration
in my Visage that had caus'd it.

In what respect, said I, is it that I am
alter'd so?

They told me, Yesterday my Looks
were so extreemly clouded and cast
down, I seem'd the very Image of De-
spair: But now my Face appear'd a-
bundantly more Beautiful, and carry'd
all the Marks of perfect Joy and Satis-
faction in it.

If you had seen, said I, what I have
seen to Day, you would not wonder at
the Change you see. --- Then going into
my Closet, I took my Pen and Ink, and
there writ down what I had heard and
seen, declaring the whole Visions from
the first to last: And then subjoyned
unto it the Poems following on Heaven
and Hell. All which I hope may have
the same effect on those that read them,
as they had upon me in writing them.---

*Now to the King Eternal, Immortal,
Invisible, the Only Wise GOD, be
Glory for ever. Amen.*

To whose Blessing I Recommend it.



A
P O E M
 ON THE
Glory of Heaven.

Eternal Majesty, who here dost Reign,
 My Muse assistance by thy spirit gain:
 Pardon, O great Three-One, my bold Adventure,
 The Holiest of Holies thus to Enter.
 O circumsise my Heart! my soul Lips touch,
 With thy great Altar's Coal, ere I approach
 Thy Honour's Dwelling: Sanctise my Verse,
 That in these humble Lines I may rehearse
 Soul-charming-Strains that ravish may with Love,
 My self and others of the Things Above.

I kiss thy Threshold, LORD, and so creep in;
 Where none approach that are defil'd with sin:
 Not that I'm pure, but foul, yet purged clear;
 For, LORD, my Sacrifice and Priest are here,
 At thy Right Hand of Glory, with Thee One,
 The Glory both of thy Right Hand and Throne;
 The Wonder of thy Mercy, Love and Grace;
 Who bears all Heaven's Joys summ'd in his Face:

The

The Heav'n of Heav'n; Man cannot wish more Bliss,
 Than to behold thy Sacred Face and His;
 Tho' but a moment who such sight might have,
 Would hug the silent bushtness of the Grave;
 Kiss Death; yea, woo Hell too, on the Condition,
 (When Time's spent to the Snuff) to have Fruition
 Of that Transcendent Joy! O Grace divine!
 Incomprehensible, save by the Trine!
 Forcing my Tongue-ty'd Muse, (wrapt with delight)
 To flatter forth a far-short Epithite;
 O Su-per-su-per-su-su-per-la-tive
 stupendious Love! into whose Depth to dive,
 Would non plus Heaven's Angelick Hierarchy,
 And wonder-strike Saints to a Lethargy!
 Yet, as if all this mighty Happiness
 Were too too small for Mankind to possiss,
 For a poor sinful Worm, too slight a Guerdon;
 He does not only give him Life and Pardon;
 Cleanses from Sin, and takes away his Guilt;
 But for his Entertainment, he has built
 The New Jerusalem, Joy's splendid Throne,
 a City whose high Walls are precious Stones;
 Her Streets Transparent Gold; her Unshut Gates
 Of Orient Pearl; all of Unval'd Rates:
 Where needs no Sun by Day, nor Moon by Night;
 For GOD's Great Glory gives Eternal Light.
 The Lamb's the Lamp thereof: Within it walk
 Earth's saved Tribes, whose Musick and whose Talk
 Are Hallelujahs: Whose white Robes out-rye
 The purest Snow in Candour: Such no Eye
 Of Mortal ever saw, nor Heart of Man
 Can half conceive; where JESUS leads the Van
 Of Sacred Myriads; Host of Lord of Hosts,
 With Millions of Angels, for the Posts
 Of that Celestial Army, which is grac'd
 With many Thousand Thousand Kings; all plac'd

On Thrones of Glory, Crown'd with endless Peace,
And Scepter'd with Triumphant Palms; where close
All Oppositions to Eternity.
For all their Enemies subdued lie,
Chain'd up in Deathless Flames, in Sulph'ry Smother,
Tormenting, and tormented by each other.
Doom'd to so horrid and immense a Curse,
Almighty Power can wish his Foes no worse.
But there's no need of Hell to set off Heaven;
Where all Good Things are in such plenty given.
Here's sweet Satiety, and pleasing Fulness,
Blessedly free from nauseating Dulness.
Heaven's Dainties cloy not, ne'er so freely ta'en;
Nor do it's Guest fear Surfeiting or Bane.
Yet 'tis a Lasting, Everlasting Feast;
Like free for all, the Greatest and the Least.
Here winged Cherubims bring in the Guests
From all Earth's Quarters, after Death's Arrests;
That Vinegar whetting their Appetites
To feed on Unexpressible Delights:
For that's God's Way, as all the Blessed know;
Who'll Feast above, must taste sour Sauce below.
Afflictions are Preparatives to Bliss;
Who bears one rightly, can't the other miss.
Farewel, Earth's fading Joys! And now dear Souls,
Let Faith's bright Eye aspire beyond the Poles;
And view those everlasting Mansions there,
Void of Disturbance, Anguish, Fear, or Care;
Of all that discontents, all that annoys;
And fill'd with Boundless and Eternal Joys.
Here the Celestial Choristers declare
Their Maker's Praise, in Hymns that Charming are:
Sweet Odes and Epithalamies they'll sing,
To Celebrate the Nuptials of their King;
Mount Sion's Lamb, Lion of Judah's Tribe;
Whose bless'd Inauguration they'll describe

In Soul-amazing Notes, that ravish quite
 All Ears with sweet Excess of choise Delight,
 The Heaven of Heavens loudly resound with Pearls
 Of Acclamations at the Open'd Seals;
 The Mystery of GOD fulfill'd they'll see,
 And Joy therein to all Eternity.
 Hark! hark! Methinks I hear Melodious Songs!
 And none such Dirties warbled by those Throngs!
 My Tow'ring Soul would fain transcend the Skies;
 And join with them in those Bless'd Rhapsodies;
 The very Thoughts whereof inflame my Heart
 With restless Longings there to bear a Part;
 Where who the least Part bears, shall bear a bright
 Weight of Eternal Glory; Great, yet Light;
 An Amaranthine Crown of Glory lasting,
 Further beyond than 'tis to Everlasting.

LORD, why doth this dull Lump of Earth detain
 My Soul from joining in their Quire, that raigue
 With thee in Glory? I even groan to be
 Dissolv'd, that I may thy bright Presence see.
 This Life's not worth desiring, now I view
 The difference 'twixt It, and That that's True.
 LORD, let me in thy blessed Presence stay,
 And wait at my Redeemer's Feet for aye!
 But ah! it cannot be! I must descend,
 And wait until this Mortal Life shall end;
 Then shall I gladly re-appear before
 Thy Throne, and live with Thee for Evermore.
 Mean time, those Dangers, blessed Lord, prevent,
 That may assail my Soul in her Descent:
 From Sin's Defilement keep me pure and free;
 And then, thy Will be done, O Lord, on me.



A N
EPIGRAM
ON THE
Foregoing Poem.

O What All-darling Lustre's here! whose bright
Corruscancy deprives all Eyes of Sight;
All Tongues of Words expressive; and all Hearts
Of comprehensive Thoughts; all these weak Parts
Are stupify'd hereat: Yet this great Throne
Was made for worthless Man's Fruition.
What Miracles bath Mercy more to do!
What! Forgive Sins, and give Sinners Heaven too!
Then let whose will for things on Earth be Betting;
For when all's got, Heaven's all that's worth the
(getting.





A

POEM

ON THE

Torments of Hell.

Horridst of Creatures! who wast solely made
 To please Eternal Justice: Thy black Shade
 Abounds with Contradictions! Freezing Fires
 With Horrid Chilness; Infinite Desires,
 Void of the least Attainments; Howling Theams
 Compos'd all of Exordiums: Fiery Beams,
 Blazing, yet Lightless; This Schools Alphabet
 Abjures Omega; They who there are met,
 To roar out Palinodes, and Elegies,
 The still Beginning: Cain (if there he lies)
 No whit farther in his Lesson come,
 Than he that last went hence to that sad home.
 Ah, Lucifer, grand Pedagogue of all,
 Hast not learn'd A, B, C, since his first Fall;
 For our and his great Master taught him better,
 The Dullard is not yet past the first Letter.

His

His Lesson's now as far from Learning out;
As 'twas when first he Troop'd the Angel-Rout
Into Rebellion; and his Lesson's dire;
'Tis Wo and Lamentations in a Fire
Tormenting, not Consuming; Burning still;
Still killing, yet doth never fully kill;
Eternal Labour with Eternal Loss;
Unceasing Cares, and yet unceasing Cross;
A Deathless Death, a Lifeless Life remains,
Which multiplies the Terror of the Pains;
Measureless, endless, hapless, hopeless State!
Who'er comes here, finds it Too soon, Too late;
Too soon to Sense, the Pain; but to prevent
That Sense, Too late; Since too late to Repent.
Ah, careless, cureless, heedless, headless Man!
Leap not into the Fire out of the Pan:
Whilst here thou would'st Afflictions Cauldron shun,
Thou darest Hell, and so art quite undone.
Temporal Crosses may be better born,
Than those that are Eternal; do not scorn
Good Counsel given gratis: Strike thy Sails:
Stoop thy Top-gallant Will; it nought avails,
Poor Sculler, these to mount in a Bravado,
When thou'rt environ'd with a strong Armado.
If thou stand out, thou'rt sunk and lost for ever;
Submit then, and to change thy Will endeavour.
Look ere thou leap'st, thy Foot is at Pits brink;
Move but a Hair's Breadth further, thou must sink,
And sink eternally. See here the Chasm,
Against whose Wounds there is no Cataplasm!
Who falls here wounded, is beyond all Cure;
And must, beyond all Time, his Pains endure.
This Dungeon hath nor Joy, nor Rest, nor Ease,
Nor Comfort, nor a Hope of ought like these;
But Desperation of them, and assurance
Of Perpetuity of Pains endurante.

View, view, bewitched Man, This Place o'f Wo
 Jehovah's Magazine of Terror! Lo!
 This Den from Beatifick Vision is
 Eccentric; quite Exterminate from Bliss:
 Its Guests all Captive Mourners, who delight
 Each other to Torment, and to Affright.
 Mutual Assassins: From Mercy far;
 Insatiate in fierce Cruelty they are:
 Whose hideous Howlings, raving, roaring Cries,
 Gnashing of Teeth and Shrieks would rend the Skies,
 Shake all the Earth to shivers, melt proud Man
 Into a Flood of Tears, make Beauty wan,
 Strength feeble, and his very Frame dissolve
 To Nothing, once to hear 'em: O resolve
 This frequently in Heart! Lest Hell's dark Flame,
 (The Thoughts whereof should wildest Mortals tame)
 Proves the first Light that gives thee sight of Sin,
 and sense of second Death: When once thou'rt in,
 There's no Redemption: Penitence too late
 Will but increase thy Torments, not abate:
 Here thou may'st see Nimrod's stern Progeny
 Tyranniz'd o'er, as they lov'd Tyranny:
 Gigantick Cyclops may tormented be,
 By Pigmy Fiends, & augment their Misery.
 The Pompous Dives here shall not command
 One Drop of Water from a Lazar's Hand;
 Nor get, altho through Thirst his Throat was clung,
 One Drop of Water for his parched Tongue.
 Abaddon and Apollyon here do reign
 Great Lords of Mis-rule o'er the Damned Train;
 Amongst whom Confusion is the perfect st Order,
 And greatest Mercy worse than horrid Murder:
 Here Lucifer and Beelzebub now lie,
 Inflicting Pain, and Pain'd Eternally.
 These lapsed Angels knowing their own Fate
 Irrevocable, are incens'd with hate

Against

Against both GOD and Man; but wanting Power
 GOD to molest, they Mankind would devour:
 Whom living, they by Flattery strive to win;
 But dead, torment most justly for their Sin.
 Their first Plot is, GOD's Image to deface,
 Which tho' once lost, is now renew'd by Grace;
 Since our base Forfeiture of that great Favour
 In Paradise, by Breach of good Behaviour.
 But since Redemption crush'd that curs'd Design,
 They do endeavour now to undermine
 Us by our nearest Friends, the World and Flesh;
 Yea, our own selves, our selves assault afresh:
 And did not an Almighty Power defend us,
 These our three Friends to those our Foes would send us.

Blessed Redeemer, let thy Banner shield us;
 And let thy Spirit still assistance yield us,
 Against those Subtilties and sly Devices,
 Whereby Hell's Regent our poor Souls invites;
 Confound his Plots, and by thy Grace relieve us;
 And from this Dismal Dungeon, Lord, reprieve us.

But thou, curst Wretch, who'rt in this woful Place,
 How wretched and how hopeless is thy Case!
 Incens'd Justice here his Power does shew:
 See, wretched Man what Sin has brought thee to!
 This is the House of thy curs'd Sin's Foundation;
 Topher, the Cell of thy deserv'd Damnation.



FINIS.

121

122

123

124

125

126

127

128

129

130

131

132